University of Alberta

Agency, Identity and the Transnational Transmission of Japanese Dance

by

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ABSTRACT

Wakaba-kai dance group is a transnational arts organization linked to Japan through a headmaster who comes to Canada several times a year. This thesis is an ethnographic account of how the study of traditional Japanese dance in the diaspora shapes the identities of Japanese Canadian women. Agency is examined specifically in relation to generation, gender, and the Japanese headmaster system or *iemoto* system. By exploring how the study of traditional dance both transforms and is transformed in the process of being transmitted across the geographic and cultural distance between Japan and Canada, this paper adds to the discourse about Japanese Canadian identity.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Posing the Question

Wakaba-kai Japanese dance group was founded by Mrs. Keiko Frueh in 1977. Yet it has only been since 1999 when Mrs. Frueh invited Einojo-*sensei*, the headmaster of the Senju dance school in Japan, to come to Canada and teach the group that they began studying classical dance in addition to the folk and modern styles they had previously learned. Since beginning the study of traditional classical Japanese dance, the group has become more serious and has presented two large-scale formal dance recitals that have drawn audiences from Edmonton and the Western region of Canada. Mrs. Frueh and the students have indicated that they have become more serious about dance since 1999 and membership has grown from six students, at the time I joined in September 2001, to twelve students as of September 2003.

This research explores the role of *nihon-buyō* (traditional Japanese dance) in the production and expression of Japanese Canadian identities in the diaspora. Although there was a transnational dimension to the early Japanese diaspora in Canada, there is a qualitative difference between the intensity of transnational ties currently experienced by newer Japanese immigrants to Canada. With increasing ease of travel and improvements in technology it is not difficult for the first generation members of *Wakaba-kai* who immigrated to Canada in the 60's, 70's and 80's to maintain ties with Japan. The third generation members, however, have few material connections to Japan and, for various reasons, have largely assimilated into mainstream Canadian society. The connection to Einojo-*sensei* has also intensified *Wakaba-kai's* transnational link to Japan.

How does the increasingly transnational nature of *Wakaba-kai* shape the identities of *Wakaba-kai* members? How does it affect the agency of members? I suggest that the transnational transmission of Japanese dance through the efforts of Mrs. Frueh and Einojo-*sensei* produces and maintains emotional and material connections to Japan and the Japanese Canadian community. These connections are used differently by members of the group to create and express their Japanese Canadian identities.

By examining the way traditional dance is differently adapted and experienced by the members of *Wakaba-kai*, I show that Japanese Canadian identity is not monolithic but plural and highly contingent on generation, individual experience and agency in dynamic interaction with the socio-historical context of the Japanese diaspora in Canada. My research indicates that while the identities of Japanese Canadian women are shaped by transnational discourses and ideologies, these women are also agents who use the same discourses and ideologies to construct their identities actively.

Entering the Field: How the Question Emerged

As a Canadian of Irish and British descent born and raised in London, Ontario and the only non-Japanese member of *Wakaba-kai* my participation in this group and interest in the relation of Japanese traditional dance and identity may seem unusual. In fact, my interest in this topic has grown out of my own experiences of displacement and relocation during my study of Japanese music in Japan from 1996 to 2000 and my subsequent study of Japanese dance in Edmonton, Alberta.

I was indirectly introduced to Japanese dance through the study of Japanese traditional music when I lived and worked in Tokyo from 1996 to 2000. I studied *nagauta*[1] *shamisen* (Japanese three-stringed lute) with a woman who specialized in teaching Japanese music to foreigners. She then introduced me to a *nagauta* drum teacher and I began studying the *tsuzumi* (hour glass shaped hand drum) and *shimedaiko* (a stick drum). Under the guidance of these two teachers I learned and performed many of the standards of the classical dance repertoire including *Musume Dōjōji*, *Goro Tokimune*, *Hanami-odori*, *Echigo-jishi*, *Kurōkami*, and others. A love of this music led me to attend many *kabuki*[2] theatre performances and dance recitals where I could observe the relationships between music and dance.

It struck me early on in my initial music lessons that I had a great deal to learn. The music was unlike the Western tradition in which I had been trained and it required a great deal of time and effort to learn its conventions and for it to sound "natural" to me.

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[1] See glossary of terms.
[2] See glossary of terms.

Beyond the technical aspects of learning to play new instruments and new repertoire, there was the importance of the form of everything that one did while in the lesson or performance space. For example, there was a proper way to sit, a proper way to pick up and put down each of the different drums and a difference between the way men and women did all of these things. The importance of form became clear immediately in my first drum lesson when my drum teacher spent almost the entire lesson just teaching me how to properly pick up and put down the drum.

The social aspects of the lesson were equally challenging. I had to learn how to bow properly in a formal kneeling style and learn the set phrases said upon entering the rehearsal space and at the beginning and end of every lesson. When speaking to my teacher in my fledgling Japanese I was always conscious of the register of any statement I made and was in constant fear of appearing rude. There was also the matter of the other students. I had to be conscious of their seniority in relation to mine so that I would not sit in the wrong place, be the first to take the tea and snacks offered during break or allow the teacher or a fellow student to pour their own tea.

The process of learning how to be a student was not smooth; I often felt nervous and was even resistant to certain expectations. The first time I had to kneel on the floor and bow to my drum teacher, I felt very uncomfortable expressing that kind of humility. Eventually with careful observation, the coaching of my *shamisen* teacher (who was also a drum student) and my increasing proficiency in Japanese, I began to feel comfortable with the ritualistic and formal elements of music lessons and performances. As I became socialized to my role as a student, my nervousness began to subside and proper form began to feel natural and inseparable from the music itself.

I initially became involved with *Wakaba-kai* in September 2001 as part of a fieldwork project for a course. Feeling rather awkward about asking a group of strangers if I could write a research paper about them, I steeled my nerve to contact Mrs. Frueh. After I introduced myself and the reason for my call, she graciously invited me to their next rehearsal and asked me to bring my *shamisen*. Although familiar with what to expect at a lesson, I was a little nervous. When I began drum lessons in Japan, my teacher was very uncomfortable with teaching a foreigner and initially refused to

teach me. Would Mrs. Frueh accept a new student? How would the other students feel about a non-Japanese person joining their group? I was also curious to see if social aspects of lessons were as strict as I remembered my lessons in Japan.

I immediately noticed that we did not bow formally before beginning the lesson. The atmosphere of dance lessons seemed less formal in other ways too: the other students were more talkative and friendly; the relationship between Mrs. Frueh and the students also seemed more casual than that of my drum teacher and her students in Japan. Although the slightly less formal structure of lessons made me feel more comfortable, it also meant that I was less certain of how to behave in dance lessons. I had to watch the other students very carefully and take cues from them as to which rules of etiquette were expected and which were not. Although I had learned lesson etiquette in Japan, only some of those rules seemed to apply at certain times in our dance lessons.

When I learned that Einojo-*sensei* would be coming to Edmonton in November 2001, I was very excited (and nervous) about taking a dance lesson with him and happy to learn that he would teach me some new music on the *shamisen*. I was also very curious to see if lessons or the style of social interaction in lessons would change. Interestingly, several weeks before Einojo-*sensei* was to arrive, Mrs. Frueh taught me how to bow formally to greet the teacher and we began to bow to her before and after lessons. When he was here, I noticed a number of differences in the way we interacted during lessons and I became fascinated by the way his presence transformed the group.

Many questions then arose. What was the group like before he became our headmaster? How do the members feel about the changes to the group? Does the introduction of more strict traditional style and etiquette cause any conflict? How have these changes affected the way dance means to the members of the group? What can this tell us about identity in diaspora?

Conceptualizing the Question

Since this research explores the relationship of traditional Japanese dance to Japanese Canadian identities in the context of increasing global flows of people and information, it is necessary to clarify a number of terms. First, I will define several

terms related to the style of dance studied by *Wakaba-kai* and the terms used to refer to specific generations of Japanese Canadians. Then I will define identity, agency, tradition and globalization as I employ them in the context of my research.

Nihon-buyō is usually translated as Japanese traditional dance. The term is a relatively recent invention as it was coined by the scholar Tsubouchi in 1907 only after contact with western dance made it necessary for a word to differentiate Japanese styles of dance from western styles (Yamazaki, 2001; 187). *Kabuki*-derived dances were chosen by Japanese intellectuals as the representative style of Japanese dance (Yamazaki, 1995). *Nihon-buyō* then came to refer specifically to these *kabuki*-derived dances. As time went on *nihon-buyō* schools began to incorporate some non-*kabuki* Japanese dances and were influenced by Western dance and music. Because of this, within *nihon-buyō* there are *kabuki*-derived dances, other classical Japanese dances, folk dances and very modern (Western influenced) dances. The ratio of these styles is one feature that differentiates dance schools from one another.

Knowledge in Japanese traditional arts such as *nihon-buyō*, music, tea ceremony and others are transmitted systematically within guilds known as *iemoto*. An *iemoto* is an organization of amateurs and professionals who are dedicated to an exclusive approach to an art (Keister, 2001). When one makes the decision to study a traditional art, one must make a commitment to a specific teacher within an *iemoto*. It is unacceptable to change teachers within one *iemoto* and moving from one *iemoto* to another is frowned upon and highly unusual. Each *iemoto* is led by a head master who is often referred to as the *Iemoto*. The *Iemoto* has the highest level of knowledge, embodies the singular way of the art as it was passed down from the previous head master, and is imbued with absolute authority.

Next to the *Iemoto* in status are dance teachers, then students who hold a stage name (*natori*). Once students reach a certain level of skill, they take a special performance examination. If successful, they become a full disciple and take on a stage name which signifies their new status as a disciple. The school name becomes their new family name and they choose a new given name which has one Japanese character in

common with that teacher. From that point on in the dance world they are known by that name. Finally, the largest group within any *iemoto* are the amateurs.

There are a number of generation terms commonly used in discussions of the Japanese diaspora in North America.[3] *Issei*, *Nisei*, and *Sansei* literally mean first, second and third generation, respectively. In the literature about Japanese Canadians and Americans, though, they tend to take on more specific meaning. *Issei* specifically refers to the first wave of Japanese immigrants to North America who immigrated primarily in the first quarter of the 20th century (Asai, 1995; 429). The *Nisei*, then, are the children of the *Issei* and the *Sansei* are the children of the *Nisei* (Asai, 1995; 430). In terms of language, some *Nisei* are proficient in Japanese and some are not whereas the third generation tend not to speak Japanese much at all (Makabe, 1998; 85). These terms are used among members of the Japanese-Canadian community and are employed even by those who do not speak Japanese. The other term which I employ is *Shin-issei* (literally "new first generation"). This term is useful in differentiating first generation immigrants who immigrated to North America *after* WWII, whose families did *not* experience interment, from the pre-WWII first generation. *Wakaba-kai* is comprised of both *Shin-issei* and *Sansei* members.

Since my research explores the role of traditional Japanese dance in the production and expression of identity in the Canadian Japanese diaspora, it is necessary to clarify what I mean by identity. The notion of collective identity as a "natural" result of sharing a common language, history, or essential biological or cultural features has been thoroughly deconstructed (Ang, 1993; Hall, 1991; 1992; Wicker, 1997). The idea that identity is socially constructed in relation to others is now common in Japanese and American scholarly conceptions of the self. Odin (1996) describes how both Zen and American Pragmatism converge to view the self as a "bipolar social self arising through communicative interaction between individuality and sociality" (Odin, 1996; 3). This "relationally defined self" is also "a temporal and multiple self which is fluid, open, shifting, decentered, variable and ever-changing according to context" (Odin, 1996; 3-4).

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[3] These generation terms are also used in Japanese immigrant communities all over the world.

If the self is defined in relation to others and changes according to context, in a rapidly globalizing world where boundaries between nations are permeable and people quickly move in and out of different contexts, identity becomes more complex. This is particularly true with diasporic identities. In diaspora, identities become multiple (Hall, 1990). In diaspora, people identify with more than one nation in different ways and with differing intensity in different contexts. For instance, a *Sansei* Japanese Canadian who travels to Japan may note how different they are from the Japanese people they meet and feel very "Canadian" while the same person when performing in a Japanese dance concert in Canada might identify themselves as more Japanese than Canadian. Furthermore, it is likely in a diaspora situation, particularly in the context of plural North American societies, that exogamy will further complicate ethnic affiliation. Thus, it is in diaspora, in particular, that people may claim membership in more than one group and agency is especially important to identity.

Hall (1991) suggests that identity is constructed through a continuous process of identifying how one's self or group is the same and different in relation to others. Because of this, a sense of belonging to a group (or several groups) is very significant. I use Benedict Anderson's idea of the "imagined community" (Anderson, 1983). By "imagined" I do not mean unreal. Ethnicity is grounded in experience and has real political consequences. The term *imagined* refers to the notion that belonging to community is experienced in part by the way we do or do not identify with the way a community is represented in art, music, language, symbols and other cultural products. In this sense, the co-presence of other ethnic group members is not necessary to experience a sense of belonging to a community, yet community events are a valuable site for the experience of ethnic identity.

Difference is also key to identity. Not only is identity constructed in relation to difference, but it is also constructed across difference. Ethnic groups are not homogenous. For instance, they may be divided by many factors including gender, generation, social class, or religion but through a process of articulation form a group. To articulate is "to unite by a joint, or joints" (Grossberg, 1996). In a more specific sense "articulation" refers to the way in which a political subject (or subjects) does, or

does not, establish links with other people or ideologies to further some agenda (Grossberg, 1996). In relation to identity politics, "articulation" is the process of linking people and groups on the basis of one or more common points so that they are identified as a group while simultaneously being intersected by many differences. What is significant about Stuart Hall's interpretation of this term is the idea that such links are "not necessary, determined, absolute or essential for all time" (Grossberg, 1996; 140). They can be broken and reconfigured for varying political purposes.

Although identity is non-essential, constructed and always in process, it is important to note, as Ang (1993) suggests, that the reason identities are able to connect and mobilize members of a group is precisely because they feel natural and essential. Ethnicity is "a social construction of consequence" in that it can be used to support or contest unequal power relations (Wong, 1995; 309). How is identity experienced as natural and essential? Abrahams (2003) suggests that identity "emerges from the stories one tells on oneself or one's community" and that these narrated events form the history of the person or group (2003; 203). Narratives that confirm the identity of the person or the group are incorporated while those that do not fit are rejected.

It is not only through narrative that identity is produced and expressed but also through performance. Goffman (1997) illustrated the ways that individuals and groups present themselves in social settings. Judith Butler has written about how gender is naturalized through repeated "performances" of gender appropriate behaviour (Butler, 1999; 1990). Her work also explores the ways that gender identities are challenged by performances which do not conform to expectations (Butler, 1999; 1990). Similarly, ethnic identities are recognizable, in part through the way they are performed (Noyes, 2003; 28).

I see identity as differentially articulated in the sense that one individual may self-identify and be identified by others in different ways according to context. Identity shifts in relation to many different subject positions that can be occupied simultaneously or in different points in time in one person's life. These subject positions are determined by social relationships that are in turn shaped by their specific location in certain times and places. This does not mean that identity is fragmented or so varied as to be

meaningless. I do not see this as a crisis of identity that is part of some post-modern psychological malaise; rather, it is through narratives constructed by individuals and groups, identification with representations of ethnicity or nation, and individual and collective performances of identity that meaning is produced.

Agency is the capacity of people to have, as well as intentionally act on personal desire and self-interest "sometimes in spite of social structural obstacles" (Cote and Levine, 2002; 219). More specifically, Dorinne Kondo's (1990) definition of agency is particularly relevant to my research. She describes agency as the capacity of human beings to create, construct, work on, and enact their identities and notes that by doing so people sometimes challenge the limits of cultural constraints (Kondo, 1990).

Agents are not completely autonomous nor is agency independent of ideology, discourse or culture. Social and cultural forces continually limit the ability of human beings to act on personal desire. Also personal desires can only be formulated within the context of language and culture and "resistance too must be produced in an ideological context" (Paul Smith, paraphrased by Dissanayake, 2002; xiii). To clarify the relation of agency to discourse, ideology and culture I refer to Paul Smith and his conception of agency as explained by Wimal Dissanayake (1996). First, Dissanayake (1996) describes the differences between subject, individual and agent. The subject is constructed by "social and cultural formations, language, and political and institutional discourses, and does not suggest the sense of autonomy, sovereignty, and initiating power that individual carries with it" (Dissanayake, 1996; x). By contrast, an agent is "the locus from which reconfirmations or resistances to the ideological are produced or played out, and therefore is not equivalent either to the individual or to subjects" (Dissanayake, 1996; x). The subject in turn is subject to multiple, shifting and often contradictory discourses. Smith suggests that the "contradictions and disturbances in and among subject-positions" create the possibility of resistance to ideological pressures. Agency then occurs in the interstices between subject positions (Dissanayake, 1996). Agents use the spaces between subject-positions to reconfirm or resist the way they are constructed through discourses and ideologies.

It is also important to clarify the relationship between agency and resistance. Because we often measure agency by documenting resistance to societal norms, agency and resistance are often paired and even conflated. This can be problematic because the term resistance can suggest reactivity and imply the reduction of people to re-actors rather than agents (Scaglion and Norman, 2000). Agency is more than resistance. One may express agency by acting according to cultural norms and Scaglion and Norman (2000) suggest that agency may be expressed through avoidance, strategic compliance as well as guile and subterfuge.

Agency is contingent and expressed in culturally specific ways. Kirkpatrick and White argue that "persons may emerge as distinct, autonomous agents in culturally specified circumstances" (Kirkpatrick and White, 1985;13). Although the capacity to act intentionally and willfully is common to all people, the expression of agency and the social constraints that limit it are culturally specific. Much scholarly research about Japan and other Asian cultures has over-emphasized the importance of groups rather than the agency of the members of those groups (Dissanayake, 1996). Recent writing about Japanese culture has focused on some of the culturally specific ways that agency is expressed in Japan (Hamabata, 1990; Kondo, 1990). There is a definite awareness of the difference between personal desire and socially expected behavior as expressed in the terms *tatemae* ("social surface") and *honne* ("real feeling") (Kondo, 1990; 141). The expression of real feeling is only acceptable in certain contexts and depends on one's relationships with others.

Although the term globalization has came into use rather recently (in the 1940's) it is important to note that the globalization of music, religion, ideology and other products is not new (Hall, 1992). A brief look at the history of Japan indicates that its culture has been significantly shaped by ideas and information appropriated from other countries and adapted to a Japanese context. Much of traditional Japanese culture, for instance, is derived from the culture of other Asian countries in the years before the Tokugawa era (1600-1868). Everything from the Japanese writing system, to certain forms of Buddhism, to musical instruments like the *shamisen*, and even entire genres of music like *Gakagaku* (Japanese court music) can be traced back variously to China,

Korea and India. The difference is that globalization, in the past, was slower. There was no technology that could instantly link a person in Korea to a person in Japan. Travel was difficult and often dangerous. Ideas and information that did flow to other locales had to be transmitted physically from person to person, proceeded slowly and required more time to disseminate in the new setting.

Contemporary globalization can be described as a broad trend by which improvements in technology have led to increasingly rapid flows of people, information, technology, ideology and capital across national and geographic borders. These increased flows integrate and connect "communities and organizations in new space-time combinations" so that the world is more interconnected and interdependent than ever before (Hall, 1992; 299). Although contemporary globalization is a result of continuous change, not sudden disjuncture, Hall (1992) suggests that globalization has intensified and become qualitatively different since approximately the 1970's.

Although globalization is often conflated with Americanization and seen only as an homogenizing force, this is an oversimplification of the complex processes involved. First, globalization does not conform to such centre-periphery models; rather, the flows of people, information, technology, ideology and capital are uneven, disjunctive and overlapping in character (Appadurai, 1996). Secondly, when something globalizes, it is adapted in some way to the context of the new locality. Finally, it is important to note that links between localities can and do result in deterritorialized communities (particularly if we consider the possibilities of the Internet) but the extension of social relations across temporal and spatial distances does not render the local irrelevant. Rather, the extension of social relations also serves to transform the local (Giddens, 2001; 245). It is the way that globalization transforms local practice and local identities with which I am concerned.

Tradition is a difficult term to define. It is commonly conceived of as that which is passed from generation to generation without change but is used in many different ways and contexts. There are three definitions of tradition relevant to this research. First, there is the idiomatic use of tradition specifically in respect to Japanese dance. Secondly, the way that tradition is constructed as the opposite of modernity and

associated with non-western culture and implies unequal power relations is significant. Third, the concept of tradition as a label for a "subset of the world or culture in which it is found" such as musical tradition or literary tradition that can be distinguished from such traditions in other cultures (Rice, 1994; 13).

Rice (1994; 13) suggests that if an emic notion of tradition exists in a culture it should be acknowledged by researchers. Both in Japan and in the Japanese diaspora, tradition is a very relevant concept. Specifically in the context of Japanese arts, tradition has a distinct meaning. Mrs. Frueh and other *Shin-issei* ladies often use "traditional" to describe dances derived from the *kabuki* theatre tradition. Mrs. Frueh initially contacted Einojo-*sensei* because she wanted some "more traditional style" dances. Why were the folk and popular-style dances that are also a part of *nihon-buyō* that *Wakaba-kai* had learned in the past not considered "traditional?" The reason that *kabuki* derived dance, as opposed to folk dance, is more "traditional" rests on the importance of transmission in the Japanese conception of traditional arts.

According to Ackermann (1990), tradition (*dentō*) in Japanese arts is inextricably linked to transmission. Tradition in reference to Japanese arts can be described as "a carefully controlled system of passing on something by specific, never anonymous, persons within a specific context" (Ackermann, 1990: 38). This system is known as the *iemoto* system. The systematic handing down of an art through the *iemoto* system differentiates classical or high "art" from popular and folk art. This explains why *kabuki* dance, rather than folk dance, is considered a true art: *kabuki* dance has been transmitted selectively from master to disciple while folk and popular dance were not controlled by such a strict system of transmission.

In a broader social context, tradition is often linked to an essentialized, non-Western, Japanese identity and constructed as the opposite of modernity. Moreover, in discourses about Japan, modernization and westernization are often conflated. Japanese traditional culture is associated with the pre-modern while Western culture is linked to modernity and progress (Befu, 1997; Harich-Schneider, 1973). This is thought to result from the way the Japanese people internalized the racist and orientalist interpretations of their culture by Westerners. Tradition has a contested position: it is alternately

associated negatively with Japan's feudal past or positively as that which makes Japan unique in the world (Dale, 1966). Although tradition is often constructed as the opposite of modern, it is in fact a very modern concept. It has been argued that social changes created many of the features of Japanese society which are now labeled as traditional (Bestor 1989; Yamazaki 1995).

In the Japanese diaspora, traditions do not only represent the past but also represent the homeland and can function as a shibboleth to distinguish the Japanese community from other ethnic communities in Canada. It is important to note though that tradition is not static. I suggest that traditional arts like Japanese dance do not replicate the past exactly as it was but that tradition, if it is an object of reflection, "becomes a 'text' for interpretation and appropriation (Rice, 1994; 13). Glassie (2003) further suggests that rather than being static tradition is "the opposite of only one kind of change: that in which disruption is so complete that the new cannot be read as an innovative adaptation of the old" (Glassie, 2003; 177). In this sense, the essence of tradition is continuity-not invariance (Glassie, 2003).

Arguably, though, many things that are continuous with the past are not considered traditions. How then are certain practices imbued with the authority of "tradition" while others are not? According to Yamazaki (1995) in *nihon-buyō* it is the teachers and the headmasters who have the authority to designate certain practices as traditional and often invoke adherence to tradition to maintain hegemonic control. Whether "tradition" is invoked to maintain hegemony, differentiate one's group from another group, or differentiate one's position in the present from the past, it is like history: it excludes more than it includes and is thus open to endless revision (Glassie, 2003).

Literature Review

General works about the Japanese diaspora of North America tend to concentrate on the internment and relocation of people of Japanese descent during WWII and its effect upon the Japanese Canadian community (Adachi, 1976; Kitagawa, 1967; Miki, 2003; Wakatsuki Houston and Houston, 1973). Combs (1985) and Yano

(1985) discuss the ways music and dance were used to try to positively represent Japanese Americans in the years leading up to WWII. Most literature about the North American Japanese diaspora emphasizes the differences among the *Issei*, *Nisei*, and *Sansei* generations. The way subsequent generations embrace the culture of Canada or America is often framed as a source of conflict among generations (Adachi, 1976; Kurashige, 2000) or as a narrative of cultural loss (Makabe, 1998) but Asai (1995) frames the way subsequent generations synthesized American and Japanese music as positive. The experiences of the *Shin-issei* (literally "new first generation" people who immigrated some time after WWII and whose families did not experience internment) have received little consideration within discourses on Japanese Canadian or American identity.

The persistence of ethnicity, particularly in the third generation, is the topic of a number of books and articles that reach widely differing conclusions. Makabe (1998) suggests that the high intermarriage rates of *Sansei* in Canada are both a result and a cause of a lack of identification and involvement in community and that without a sizeable and steady influx of new immigrants, the community, as it has been, will almost certainly disappear. Fugita and O'Brien (1991), in contrast, claim that the Japanese American community in California persists at least partly because traditional Japanese values are passed down from generation to generation.

Asai's (1997) research into the activities of *Sansei* musicians suggests that the *Sansei* do express their Japanese identities through music. *Taiko* (a modern style of drum music with highly choreographed movements) and its significance to third generation Japanese Canadian and Americans has been explored quite extensively (Fujie 2001; Wong 2000a; Wong 2000b). Izumi's (2001) research even suggests that the way taiko presents Japanese and Asian women as strong combats stereotypes of Japanese women. *Nihon-buyō* in relation to *Sansei* women is mentioned only in passing by one of Izumi's (2001) informants who suggests it is too traditional to be relevant to her life.

There have been relatively few ethnographic or anthropological English language studies of Japanese dance but *O-bon* festival[4] dancing in the Japanese diaspora has received a significant amount of scholarly attention (Combs, 1985; Van Zile, 1986; 1982; Yano, 1985). Several post-war monographs provide information about the history, development, and style of *nihon-buyō* (Ashihara 1965; Ernst 1956; Masakatsu 1970). Of those, only Ashihara's work (1965) touches upon the social significance of Japanese dance in Japanese society to any extent. More recent scholarship from an ethnographic perspective has tended to document and analyze the processes of transmission in Japanese dance. Tomie Hahn's (1996) research on transmission discusses how culture shapes and is expressed by the body of the dancer and provides detailed analysis of the learning process as she observed it in the Hatchobori school of dance in Tokyo. The work of Deborah Klens (1995) is particularly interesting in that it describes "non-traditional" approaches to teaching *nihon-buyō* that have developed in Japan. It is Yamazaki (2001) though who explores the complexity of "tradition" as a concept and its contested position in discourses about Japanese dance and Japanese identity.

The most significant scholarly work on *nihon-buyō* in the Japanese diaspora has been done by Barbara Sellers-Young (2001; 1993). Her ethnography of a Japanese dance group in Ontario, Michigan gives emphasis to the way that dance transmission in America is continuous with processes in Japan. She posits that the style of somatic learning (learning with the body) not only transmits dances but cultural values as well. A later article by Sellers-Young (2001) attends to issues of difference, such as how the meaning of dance is transformed according to the subjective identities of dancers. My research extends the work of other *nihon buyō* scholars, particularly those who consider transmission and tradition to examine dance in *Wakaba-kai* (Hahn, 1996; Klens, 1995; Yamazaki, 2001). Like Sellers-Young, I consider the way dance is learned in the Japanese diaspora but focus specifically on Canada and explore not just the way tradition remains the same but also how it changes because of the shifting local and

[4] *O-bon* is a Buddhist festival in August during which one's dead ancestors are believed to come and visit one's home for several days. Part of this celebration involves dancing a style of folk dance known as *bon-odori*. There are many different *bon-odori* dances but they are circle dances done by a group of people.

global relations that operate within *Wakaba-kai*. I address the lack of information, not only on the significance of Japanese dance in the Japanese Canadian community of Edmonton, but also the lack of information regarding *Shin-issei* experiences of being Japanese Canadian and explore the relationship between the new first generation and the *Sansei*.

Scope of Study

Chapter 2: Einojo-*Sensei*, *Wakaba-kai* and the *Iemoto* System

This chapter provides background information necessary for understanding how studying dance with Einojo-*sensei* has changed *Wakaba-kai*. This information includes: the history of *Wakaba-kai* and Einojo-*sensei*; information about the members of the group; the differences between styles of Japanese dance; the *iemoto* system; and the status of dance and other traditional arts in Japan.

Chapter 3: *Nihon-buyō* and the Maintenance of Ethnic Identity in the Diaspora

There are many differences between the *shin-issei* and the *Sansei* generation members of *Wakaba-kai*. This chapter explores those differences and examines how they shape the way Japanese dance relates to their identities. In particular, I focus on how the bi-cultural identities of the *Shin-issei* and the internment and relocation experiences of the families of the *Sansei* affect identity. Many *Sansei* Japanese Canadians do not seek to connect to their Japanese heritage but the members of *Wakaba-kai* seem to actively cultivate Japanese identity. Why are the *Sansei* members of *Wakaba-kai* different? What factors affect their choices to cultivate their identities through dance?

Chapter 4: *Nihon-buyō* and Gender: Agency in Text and Context

Japanese Canadian women have been constructed through Orientalist, sexist and racist discourses as passive and lacking agency. The representation of women in dance narratives and the highly stylized enactment of ideal femininity in dance can be interpreted as serving to reify stereotypes of the passive Japanese woman. The members

of *Wakaba-kai* seem to defy such stereotypes and display agency. How can my observations of the members of *Wakaba-kai* be reconciled with the representation of women in dance? How do they experience dance? To answer these questions, I compare the way Japanese women have been constructed through texts like Madame Butterfly, television commercials and dance narratives, with the self-narratives of members and an alternate interpretation of the dance *Harusame* (Spring Rain).

Chapter 5: Tradition and Agency in a Transnational Arts Organization

The study of dance shapes the identities of students in a variety of ways. The hierarchical structure and the ideological basis of the *iemoto* system in the context of certain Japanese cultural norms are very significant factors in this shaping process. In the diaspora, however, many of these notions conflict with the beliefs, values and economic needs of Japanese-Canadian dance students. What happens to the *iemoto* system and its power to shape identities when it extends into a diasporic community? Does the extension of this hierarchical organization limit agency in *Wakaba-kai*? Can it shape identity to the same extent? I argue that the unique conditions in which *Wakaba-kai* exists provide greater opportunity for members to adapt the iemoto system and its ideologies to construct Japanese-Canadian identities within the context of the dance group. Members are not simply created by the system – they interact with the organizational structure and its ideologies to adapt it to their own needs. This shows that *Wakaba-kai* members both resist and reproduce; craft, and are crafted by the iemoto system.

Approach

I approached this study as participant-observer. It is a standard approach in most studies of Japanese art music or dance for researchers to become students (Hahn, 1996; Keister, 2001; Malm, 1998; Sellers-Young, 1993; Yamazaki, 2001). Due to the closed nature of most traditional Japanese arts organizations and the emphasis placed on non-verbal learning in the transmission process, becoming a student is often the only way to learn. Sellers-Young (1993) described how asking direct questions and attempting to

elicit explanations from their teachers was met with resistance. The teacher, as the holder of the tradition, controls transmission and decides what a student needs to know and when, while the student does their best to internalize the art. There is emphasis in Japanese arts on watching and imitating before analyzing or breaking down into parts. Speaking and explanation do occur but are just one part of learning. Because of this, I approached my research from the position of a student who watches and learns. Only after becoming a part of the group did I begin to interview my teachers and the other students.

To analyze the ways *Shin-issei* and *Sansei* subjective identities are differentially produced and expressed through the study of dance necessitates comparison on several levels. The loose comparative framework that I use consists of four parts. First, by relying on accounts from Mrs. Frueh and the other students, I compare the way dance was practiced before Einojo-*sensei* became involved to my (and other members') observations of current practice. Secondly, within the period since Einojo-*sensei* became our headmaster, I compare how our way of doing dance shifts according to which teacher is present at a particular time. All of these ways of doing *nihon-buyō* in Canada are set against a concept of the way dance is practiced in Japan based upon my experiences as a *nagauta* student and supplemented by other ethnographic accounts of traditional dance and music transmission processes in Japan. Finally, I compare the way dance means differently to the *Shin-issei* and *Sansei* members of the group.

In this research my personal experiences and observations as a student of Japanese music in Japan and as a student of *nihon-buyō* in Edmonton play a significant role. The study of *nagauta* has much in common with the study of *nihon-buyō* because a significant part of the *nihon buyō* repertoire is choreographed to *nagauta* and the process of transmission is very similar. Both *nagauta* and *nihon-buyō* are transmitted according to the conventions of the *iemoto* system so that the art is learned directly through a one on one relationship with the teacher. Imitation of the teacher is the primary means of learning repertoire (notation is traditionally not used in music lessons) and thus learning is "embodied" (Keister, 2001).

Method

The research methodology for this project reflects my comparative approach to the study of "tradition." The main body of information for this study was gathered from September 2001 to March 2003 while I was a Japanese dance student of *Wakaba-kai* in Edmonton. As a participant-observer, I was fully involved in *Wakaba-kai*. I attended dance lessons with Mrs. Frueh and Einojo-*sensei* (who also gave me *shamisen* lessons), and performed in a number of small recitals as well as the formal dance recital held at the Myer Horowitz Theatre on May 24, 2002. With several other members of *Wakaba-kai* I taught Japanese cultural presentations at the Edmonton Japanese Community Centre, Alberta Children's Festival and the Alberta Teacher's Conference. I also attended group social events such as lunches and birthday parties.

Events were documented in field notes and photographs. Informal conversations at lessons, performances and social events were a significant source of information. In addition, more formal interviews were conducted with each of the six main members of the group and both teachers. Interviews with Einojo-*sensei* were conducted in Japanese with the translation assistance of Mrs. Frueh. On occasion I made audio recordings of lessons and used video recordings of concerts and recitals that were recorded by Mr. Frueh.

Other research relevant to this project began informally in 1996, when I became a student of *nagauta*. I had many opportunities to learn directly from experts. My music teachers shared their knowledge of music and theatre as well as their unique and sometimes critical perspectives on Japanese tradition and culture. Similarly in Japan, I spoke with other ethnomusicologists specializing in Japanese music and theatre, even discussing Japanese music with William Malm on several occasions. This participation in traditional arts formed the basis of my knowledge of Japanese instruments; music, dance and theatre genres; Tokugawa era music, art and stories; transmission processes; and the significance and characteristics of the *iemoto* system in Japan.

Beyond the study of music, simply living in Japan and teaching English as a Second Language was a significant source of information about Japanese people and culture in general. My job as an ESL teacher was to engage students in conversation so

that they could improve their fluency in English. As a result, I was able to learn a great deal about life in Japan from the various perspectives of my students who ranged in age from three to sixty-five years old. Moreover, because my interest in traditional Japanese culture was very novel to students, it was often a topic of conversation in lessons. While living there I gained a great deal of cultural knowledge through my study of Japanese, eventually passing the level three Japanese National Proficiency Examination in 2000.

Although unaware of fieldwork methodology while in Japan, I was somewhat systematic in gathering information. I acquired music notation, translations and English language resources about Japanese art, music and theatre. When I attended traditional music concerts or theatre performances, I made notes and collected the programs. My journal entries from those years detail much of the information I learned from my teachers and students and describe my impressions and reactions to people and events. To supplement this early informal fieldwork, I rely on first hand accounts of the transmission processes in music and dance as described by other researchers (Keister, 2001; Klens, 1995; Yamazaki, 2001).

Sometimes directly quoted and sometimes paraphrased, the voices of the teachers and members of *Wakaba-kai* are woven into this paper. I usually name the speaker but in the case where particularly sensitive information is presented, names are omitted. In some cases the names of participants have been changed. Though I have attempted as much as possible to present many voices, I acknowledge that my interpretation of events is grounded in the contrasting experiences I have had as a student in Japan and then in Edmonton.

The material I analyze in this paper comes primarily from dialogue with members of the group and my observations of how social relationships are enacted during dance events. Analysis of dances and dance movements form a nominal part of this work. Because the goal of the student is to dance exactly like the teacher, the dances themselves tend not to change significantly. The dances represent the continuous part of the globalization of dance tradition while the transformative aspects of globalizing dance tradition are most observable in the processes of transmission.

CHAPTER 2: EINOJO-*SENSEI*, *WAKABA-KAI* AND THE *IEMOTO* SYSTEM

How has *Wakaba-kai*'s transnational connection to Einojo-*sensei* changed the group? What is the significance of his involvement with *Wakaba-kai*? To outline the changes and their significance this chapter will describe the history of *Wakaba-kai* and Einojo-*sensei*'s position as the *Iemoto* of *Senju* school as well as the differences between classical dance, *shin-buyō*, *minnyo-buyō* and *bon-odori*.

History of *Wakaba-kai*

Wakaba-kai initially formed for the purpose of representing the Edmonton Japanese community at the Heritage Festival.[5] While working for the Consulate-General of Japan at Edmonton, Mrs. Frueh was asked to dance at the 1976 Heritage Festival. At that time she performed alone but in 1977 began teaching a group of children and young women to do *bon-odori*.[6] For many years, the dance group continued to gather several months before Heritage Days, rehearse, perform and then meet again the following year. Towards the mid-eighties, fewer students were able to participate as they became involved in other hobbies, went to university or got married. At this point, adult women from the Japanese community, several of whom had children involved in dance, began dancing and a number of these adults agreed to participate each year. Involvement of several of the current members of *Wakaba-kai* dates back to that time.

After it became clear that there was a fairly steady group of about six women willing to participate each year, Mrs. Frueh invited a Vancouver Dance teacher, Nakamura-*sensei*,[7] to come to Edmonton and teach the group some more advanced dances. So, once a year, from 1994 to 1997, Nakamura-*sensei* would come to Edmonton and in a two-day workshop teach *minnyo-buyō* (folk dance) or *shinbuyō* (modern Japanese dance) which the group would continue to study with Mrs. Frueh and perform

[5] Heritage festival is a multicultural festival in Edmonton which features the food, music, dance and culture of various Edmonton ethnic groups.
[6] See glossary of Japanese terms.
[7] This is not her real name.

at the Heritage Festival. The dances that they did were always group dances. At this time, they began receiving requests to perform at schools and in nursing homes.

The students learned a great deal from Nakamura-*sensei*, but Mrs. Frueh was a classical dancer and wanted to do more traditional Japanese dance. She wanted *Wakaba-kai* to learn classical dance but really could not imagine how it was possible until Yurika,[8] a young Japanese woman living in Edmonton told her about Einojo-*sensei*. Yurika told Mrs. Frueh that her friend, Einojo-*sensei*, was interested in coming to Canada. Coincidentally, both Einojo-*sensei* and Mrs. Frueh are from the same home town, a small town outside of Kyoto called Nara. So on a trip home to visit family in 1999 Mrs. Frueh arranged to meet with him and Einojo-*sensei* agreed to come to Edmonton to teach the group.

In March 1999, he taught *Wakaba-kai* a variety of modern and traditional classical style solo and group dances that they performed in a recital two months later at the Provincial Museum Auditorium. *Wakaba-kai* members had experience learning dance and knew many of the basics, but this was the first time that anyone, besides Mrs. Frueh, had learned classical dance or performed solo dance. Classical dances primarily use the movement vocabulary of *kabuki* dance dramas, which is somewhat different than *minnyo-buyō* (folk dance) or *shin-buyō* and tends to be more complex.[9] To prepare the group for the recital Einojo-*sensei* stayed in Edmonton for almost one month before returning to Japan. He came back to Edmonton with some of his Japanese *nihon-buyō* students to perform at the recital. In this two-month period *Wakaba-kai* members learned nine dances: six solo dances and three group dances. Since 1999, Einojo-*sensei* has returned to Edmonton once or twice a year to teach new dances.

Einojo-*sensei*'s involvement has been the catalyst for many long-term changes in the group. Before they began studying with Einojo-*sensei*, they did not meet every week throughout the year. They would usually gather several months before Heritage Festival to review *bon-odori* and perfect the *shin-buyō* or *minnyo-buyō* dances that Nakamura-*sensei* had taught them. When the festival or performance was over, they

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[8] This is not her real name.

[9] *Shinbuyō* and *minnyo-buyō* dances can be very challenging but classical dances tend to be much longer, through-composed and less influenced by western dance movements.

would take rather long breaks and reconvene only to prepare for another specific event. At this time, individual home practice was recommended but not crucial. The difficulty level of the

dances was such that attendance at group rehearsals was usually sufficient to prepare for a performance. In order to learn the longer and more difficult solo and group classical and *shin-buyō* dances taught by Einojo-*sensei*, it became necessary to practice individually at home and as a group regularly every Thursday evening throughout the year.[10]

Mrs. Frueh feels that classical dance is more difficult for Canadian audiences to appreciate. For that reason she often chooses to perform *shin-buyō* or *minnyo-buyō* at summer festivals and school shows or includes a mixture of classical and *shin-buyō* dances for variety. Because she feels only certain venues and performance opportunities are suitable for the presentation of lengthy classical dances, she has had to create performance opportunities such as the May 2002 recital. Since learning classical dance, *Wakaba-kai* has been more active creating their own performance opportunities.

Learning classical dances taught by Einojo-*sensei* and preparing for formal performances has made the members of the group more motivated to study dance. Mineko said that for a long time, Japanese dance was an enjoyable social activity but that the 1999 dance recital really inspired her to work harder and practice dance more seriously. Nakano-san and Kyoko have told me that they really enjoy the challenge of learning classical dances and solo *shin-buyō* dances. Terese has said that her enjoyment of dance has increased since it became more challenging and she has noticed that Mrs. Frueh has also become a stricter teacher.

Mrs. Frueh is very happy with the changes that the study of classical dance has brought forth. In addition to the fact that she herself has the opportunity to continue learning classical dance style, she is pleased with the progress *Wakaba-kai* is making. According to her, learning classical dance style has improved the way the group performs other genres of dance. She said that, "the quality since he [Einojo-*sensei*] came, everybody's quality went up. Even when they do *shin-buyō* it's better. Before,

[10] They often take a month off in the summer.

they didn't know how to do the movements…so I'm glad" (Edmonton, 2001). She and Einojo-*sensei* have both said that classical dance training forms the basis for good *shin-buyō* dance.

Mrs. Frueh has a stage name with the *Wakayagi-ryū* (Wakayagi School). Although Mrs. Frueh's affiliation with *Wakayagi-ryū* is reflected in the name *Wakaba-kai* (the first two syllables of each name is the same), *Wakaba-kai* was, in practice, completely independent of the larger *iemoto* system. This changed when Einojo-*sensei* became involved. Now the group is connected through him to the *Senju* school. This link to Japan through the pseudo-familial ties of the *iemoto* means that *Wakaba-kai* is now in a relationship of mutual obligation to Einojo-*sensei* and the school itself.

Einojo-*sensei* and the *Senju* Buyodan

Einojo-*sensei* began teaching dance in 1993 and in 1999 became the second-generation headmaster of the *Senju-ryū*. Encouraged by his mother, he began to study dance when he was eight years old with a teacher from one of the largest dance schools in Japan, the *Hanayagi-ryū*. His own teacher, Hanayagi Akito, felt that working within such a large school had advantages and disadvantages. Because *Hanayagi-ryū*, founded in 1849 (Klens, 1995), is an older, established school, there was resistance to choreographing and teaching more modern dances. Also, as the largest dance school in Japan the cost of studying had become very high.[11] For these reasons, his teacher decided to split from the *Hanayagi-ryū* and start the *Senju-ryū*. To signify this change, he changed his stage name to *Senju* Wakanojo. Because Wakanojo-*sensei* did not have any sons of his own, Einojo-*sensei* was chosen to become the *Iemoto* because he was the most skilled male student in the group. Ordinarily, the *Iemoto* position is passed on from father to son but it is also quite common when there is no suitable biological heir that a talented, yet unrelated student is chosen to succeed the *Iemoto*.[12]

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[11] As schools increase in size and prestige the cost becomes higher because there are more generations of teachers and iemoto who will receive a portion of honoraria.

[12] Although it is most common for *Iemoto* to be men, there are exceptions. The issue of gender and the *iemoto* system will be addressed in greater detail in Chapter 3.

Einojo-*sensei* is quite active as a performer and in other dance and music organizations in his home city of Nara. Since 1995, he has been president of the Nara Classical Dance Association which organizes recitals and works to promote Japanese dance. In addition to dance, he studies *shamisen* with the *Imafuji-ryū* and is a proficient singer and *shamisen* player.

Since becoming the *Iemoto*, Einojo-*sensei* has been working hard to promote the *Senju*-school and further Wakanojo-*sensei*'s goal of introducing Japanese dance to people of all ages and nationalities. As of September 2001, there were approximately 100 members of the *Senju-ryū*. That number has grown to 126 in 2003. There are currently four *Senju* schools: three in Nara City, one school in Edmonton, Alberta and one new school in Osaka that opened in 2003. Since 2002, he has also been teaching dance at the Osaka University of Health and Sports Science. Like Wakanojo-*sensei*, Einojo-*sensei* travels and performs outside of Japan. Einojo-*sensei* performed at our 1999 and 2002 recitals in Edmonton and performed in Manila, Phillipines in spring 2003. The Edmonton school has grown from six students in August 2001 to eleven students in June 2003.

Shin-issei Students

Kyoko Kamei

Kyoko moved to Canada in 1982 with her husband and two young children. The family lived in Vancouver for about three months before moving to Edmonton. Although initially she did not want to leave Japan she is now happy living in Edmonton and does not wish to return to Japan permanently. Kyoko took a one year course in *kimono no kitsuke* (the art of kimono dressing) and also studied *kouta shamisen* in Japan. She has taught many of us how to put on kimono and is responsible for maintaining our inventory of costumes and properties. She is occasionally called on to dress local Japanese Canadian woman in *kimono* for weddings.

Mineko Sasano

In 1970 Mineko moved from Japan to Toronto, Canada where she lived for a while before briefly moving to Vancouver and finally settling in Edmonton in 1983. She is very involved in activities at the Edmonton Japanese Cultural Association (EJCA) and is a member of both the calligraphy and karaoke clubs.

Natsuko Cyr

Natsuko immigrated to Canada in 1961 to attend graduate school at the University of British Columbia where she received her PhD in chemistry. After working for the Alberta Research Council for many years she is now retired but still runs her own technical translation company that specializes in the Japanese to English translation of patents. In addition to studying dance and working, she is an active member of the Edmonton Japanese Business Association and an avid badminton player.

Yuko Nakano

Yuko moved to Canada in 1970 and lived in Calgary before moving to Edmonton in 1972. She raised her children while her husband went to graduate school and now that her children are grown is very active as a member of *Wakaba-kai* and the Karaoke club. In addition to dance, she works in a Japanese restaurant and is very involved in the Edmonton Karaoke Club: she is a founding member and the first woman to join the group. Although she had done *bon-odori* as a child in Japan she did not have a great interest in dance at that time because she was very involved in sports. In high school, she began training in track and field eventually specializing in shotput and winning a silver medal at the 1966 Asian Games.

3rd Generation Students

Japanese Dance in Edmonton Before *Wakaba-kai*

Before Mrs. Frueh started *Wakaba-kai*, there was a Japanese dance group run by Michi Miyagishima. During the 1970's this group of girls and young women, learned *bon-odori* and dances choreographed to well-known Japanese folk music. They also

performed at various events including the Klondike Days Parade, the Lethbridge *bon-odori*, and other events in the Japanese community. In 1975, they performed at the Provincial Museum in Edmonton and in 1977 danced in honour of the Centennial anniversary of the arrival of the first Japanese to Canada. The group disbanded in 1977 when Mrs. Miyagishima moved away. Two of the third generation students, Terese and Ann, began studying dance with Mrs. Miyagishima.

Ann Cassidy

Ann became involved in Japanese dance in her second year of university. She was part of Mrs. Miyagishima's group for about three years until the group disbanded in 1977. At that point she took several years off before returning to dance to study with Mrs. Frueh for two years. Ann has always had an interest in dance having studied ballet from age 6 to age 16, then taking several years of jazz and modern dance lessons but it was not until university that she developed an interest in Japanese dance. During university, she began to be strongly attracted to "all things Japanese" and also began studying Japanese language. She thinks that as a *Sansei* she felt the need to learn about her roots. After a very long absence, Mrs. Frueh called her in the fall of 2002 and Ann, who had already decided to begin studying some kind of dance as a hobby, returned to *nihon-buyō*. She loves dancing for its own sake but also feels that Japanese dance is an important connection to her heritage and a link to the Japanese community in Edmonton. Besides Mrs. Frueh, Ann is the only student in the group who has studied Japanese dance in Japan. During summer of her second year of university, she went to Japan with her mother and took dance lessons for about one month eventually performing that dance at the Japanese community Christmas party.

Terese Rek

Terese has been studying dance on and off since she was 14 when she joined Mrs. Miyagishima's group. She was introduced to dance when her father found out that there was a group, and asked Terese and her older sister if they wanted to get involved. At that time she was very shy so if it had not been for her older sister's enthusiasm, she

thinks she may not have begun. When Mrs. Miyagishima's group disbanded when Terese was in grade 11, she stopped studying dance. It was not until after university that she returned to dance and began participating in Heritage Days performances. She is a pharmacist so she is quite busy and has occasionally taken breaks from dance but has been steadily involved in *Wakaba-kai* since 1999. She enjoys dance because it is challenging and connects her to her Japanese heritage. Together with Ann, Terese is now studying Japanese.

Marjene Turnbull

Born and raised in Vernon B.C., Marjene grew up in a very active Japanese community. There were many opportunities to enjoy traditional Japanese culture. She learned dance at the Buddhist church in Vernon and performed for festivals and other activities. In 1964, she moved to Edmonton to attend the University of Alberta then married and moved to Onoway to raise her family. There was no active Japanese community in Onoway so she joined EJCA so that she and her family could participate in summer picnics and other EJCA events. In 1979 she heard that Mrs. Frueh was organizing *bon-odori* for Heritage Days and thought it would be a good experience for her children and they participated that year. She began dancing again when she attended the June 2002 Kurimoto Japanese Garden Japanese Spring Festival. When the crowd was invited to join in with *Wakaba-kai*, she jumped at the chance and found she really enjoyed dancing. On that day Kyoko suggested that she begin dancing with *Wakaba-kai* and Marjene joined the group in November 2002.

The *Iemoto* System

The *iemoto* system is a remnant of Japan's feudal past. "*ie*" means household and "*Iemoto*" means head of the household. Hsu (1975) describes it as "a fixed and unalterable hierarchical arrangement voluntarily entered into among a group of human beings who follow a common code of behaviour under a common ideology for a set of common objectives" (Hsu, 1975; 62). It originated as a way of organizing the household and ensuring the transmission of property to the most suitable male heir. As a general

rule, transmission is characterized by primogeniture but it is also not uncommon for the first son to be passed over if he is deemed unsuitable (Bachnik, 1983).[13] According to Bachnik (1983) a daughter might have occasionally succeeded the *Iemoto* but in most cases if there was no son, the man who married the eldest daughter became the *Iemoto* (Bachnik, 1983).

Although the *iemoto* system is no longer the government sanctioned system of household organization in Japan, it has remained a dominant shaping force within the world of Japanese traditional arts. The *iemoto* system extends patriarchal household organization into the arts to control the transmission of dance style and the financial rewards associated with a famous name. Hsu (1975) refers to the *iemoto* system as a "kin-tract structure" because it is partly built on a kinship model because, "once fixed, the hierarchical relationships tend to become permanent" and partly based on a contract model "since the decision for entering, and occasionally for quitting a particular grouping rests with the individual" (Hsu, 1975; 62).

The central relationship in the *iemoto* is the teacher-student relationship. Following the "kin-tract" model the teacher essentially becomes the student's parent in the arts (Keister, 2001). The teacher controls all aspects of dance transmission and performance: he decides which dances the student will learn and when, and which pieces will be performed in recitals. The student is expected to imitate the teacher's style to the best of her ability, and diligently internalize the teacher's teachings. Unlike Western traditions, the teacher-student relationship continues for the duration of a student's life, even if she becomes professional. It is unacceptable to switch from one teacher to another within the same school or to study with more than one teacher.

Hsu (1975) describes the *iemoto* system as an interlinking hierarchy with the *Iemoto* at the top. Following the *Iemoto*, from highest to lowest status, there are three groups: those who are licensed by the school to teach; the students who hold *natori* (stage names); and the students who do not hold stage names.[14] The *Iemoto* is chosen on the basis of being the most skilled representative of the artistic tradition taught by the

[13] See Bachnik (1983) for more information about recruitment strategies for household succession.
[14] In some schools, a stage name is also a license to teach but in other schools, further training and a second examination are required to receive a teaching license.

Iemoto before him. It is the *Iemoto*'s responsibility to pass down the "authentic" version of the work to the members of the group. To receive a *natori* one must reach a certain level of expertise, perform in a special recital, and pay about one million yen (approximately $10 000 CD). One cannot perform or teach professionally without a stage name. If successful, the student receives a new name that signifies her identity in the dance world: she takes the name of the guild as a surname and receives a new given name that has one character in common with the teacher. Students who do not hold stage names comprise the largest group in the hierarchy. The *Iemoto* has the right to settle disputes between teachers and to even expel a student who behaves in a way inappropriate to her status.

In Japan there are tremendous costs associated with the study of *nihon-buyō*. In fact, it has been described as the most expensive art in the world (Havens, 1982). In addition to expected costs such as lessons, there is the fee to receive a stage name and students pay to perform. To perform at a recital a dancer must cover the cost of hiring professional musicians, the rental of special costumes and give tips to those who help with costumes and make-up as well as provide lunch for the guests they invite. One acquaintance of mine in Japan paid one million yen (approximately $10 000 CD) to perform a twenty minute dance in a formal recital. Typically, a student is expected to buy a family crest *kimono* or a special cotton towel produced by the *iemoto*. Students also typically provide their teacher with a cash gift in the summer gift-giving season and in the winter. Honoraria are paid directly to the teacher who then gives a portion of money received to the *Iemoto*.

Partly because it is modeled on a system of patriarchal household organization, historically the *iemoto* system has tended to privilege the appointment of men rather than women in the choosing of a successor. This is still generally true so that although most students and many teachers are female, most *Iemoto* are male. Dance *iemoto*, compared to other traditional arts tend to have a higher incidence of female teachers and *Iemoto*. Japanese traditional arts organizations rely heavily on the participation of female amateurs. The money that they pay for lessons and to participate in recitals supports the careers of the teachers and ultimately the *Iemoto* (Keister, 2001).

There are several aspects of Japanese traditional dance practice and arts organizations in general that are often criticized in Japan. Malm (1998) and Keister (2001) note that the *iemoto* system has been criticized at times as stifling the creativity of performers and rewarding performers for their relationship to an important figure in the world of the art, rather than for their artistic skills. A further criticism of Japanese arts and arts organizations is the marginalized position of women performers (Keister, 2001).

Dance *iemoto* have changed considerably in the 20th century. This increase is largely the result of two trends: a dramatic increase in students and the tendency of teachers from larger schools to break away and start their own groups. When *nihon-buyō* began in the early 20th century, there were only several different schools but now there are more than 300 different dance *iemoto* operating in Japan (Sellers-Young, 1993; 19). When the original dance schools formed, each school had a very distinct style that was related to a specific *kabuki* choreographer, but the basis for difference among schools has changed. Einojo-*sensei* has said that the classical dances that derived from *kabuki* tend to be taught almost exactly the same way among different *iemoto*. The difference between schools lies in which parts of classical dances are learned and performed. Since classical dances choreographed to *nagauta* can be up to an hour long, parts of the music are often omitted to make a shorter dance. Different schools omit different parts of dances. It is in *shin-buyō* (modern dance) that teachers and schools can distinguish themselves with creative choreography. Another significant difference between schools is seen in the ratio of classical to modern dance in a given *iemoto*.

The Status of Japanese Traditional Music and Dance in Japan

In Japan, traditional Japanese music is not popular. Music consumers in Japan are far more likely to listen to many other kinds of music including Western and Japanese pop music, jazz, Western classical music, and world music than to traditional Japanese music. Very few people play traditional instruments; it is much more likely that a Japanese child will take piano lessons than *shamisen* lessons. Even Western classical music is generally more popular in Japan than Japanese classical music. Thus

traditional music genres such as *nagauta*, *kouta*, or *hauta*[15] are quite foreign and exotic to most Japanese people.

Nihon-buyō society in Japan is a "closed community" within Japanese society: it is closed because one must "acquire special membership" to be a part of it (Yamazaki, 1995; 17). One must be commit to study an art with a particular school to become part of the community. As a consequence of this Yamazaki (1995) argues that Japanese dancers lack a true public for their art; rather they rely on friends, family and other dance students to attend concerts. Dance is also marginalized because it is seen by the general public as unrelated to modern life in Japan and only seems relevant on special occasions like New Year's Day when everything should be traditional (Yamazaki, 1995).

There is also ambivalence in regard to *nihon-buyō* and its appropriateness for young women. On one hand, dance, *kabuki* theatre and many traditional arts are associated with wealth and the upper class, since the cost of studying is extremely high. Conversely, the association of dance with *kabuki* has some negative connotations. *Kabuki* dramas and the derivative dances portray characters from the past including geisha and courtesans. Also, there are often many puns and suggestive phrases in the lyrics of theatre genres. In the past the appropriateness of young women from "good families" performing these dances has at times been questioned (Ashihara, 1965; 66).

Nihonbuyō: Dance Styles and Musical Genres

Wakaba-kai learns and performs four different styles of dance that are more or less accessible to the average Japanese or Japanese Canadian person. From least accessible to most accessible these include *nihon-buyō*, *shin-buyō*, *minnyo-buyō* and *bon-odori*. In lessons, Mrs. Frueh refers to dances derived from *kabuki* plays or dances set to the genres of *nagauta*, *kouta* and *hauta* as classical.

Kabuki is a form of Japanese theatre that began in the 17th century which combines singing, dancing and acting. The first *nihonbuyō* schools were founded in the 18th century by *kabuki* dancers and choreographers who tapped into the interest of

[15] See glossary of Japanese terms.

kabuki fans from the growing merchant class. Many of the most popular dances studied and performed today, including *Musume Dōjōji*, *Fuji Musume* and *Goro Tokimune*, are excerpts from *kabuki* plays. It is important to note that there are a number of genres of music used to accompany *kabuki*, including *tokiwazu*, *kiyomoto* and others, but most famous *kabuki* dances are choreographed to *nagauta* music.

Dances choreographed to *nagauta* (literally "long-song") tend to be quite long (anywhere from eight minutes to over one hour) and are usually learned by more advanced students. There are also shorter classical dances set to genres like *kouta* and *hauta*. These three classical genres of music share certain characteristics. They consist of a vocal part accompanied by traditional Japanese instruments. The music is heterophonic and through-composed. Communication of the text is very important, and for the sake of clarity, the vocal line and shamisen parts are staggered so that the vocal line usually follows the shamisen line by half a beat. This stylistic feature is known as *fusoku-furi* (Malm, 1973; 50). The texts of classical genres are often about characters, actions and events from the Edo period (1600-1868). *Nagauta* differs from *hauta* and *kouta* in that it is much longer, and is usually performed by a large ensemble of singers, *shamisen* players, drummers and a flautist. One singer and a *shamisen* player usually perform *hauta* and *kouta*.[16]

Generally in Japanese classical music tempo is slightly more flexible than in western classical music and Japanese folk music.[17] Tempo tends to increase and decrease within individual phrases. This makes the concept of *ma* particularly important in classical genres. Malm (1973; 43) defines *ma* as "the space between events" but *ma* is not only about rests but refers to the "overall timing of a piece – not just the pauses and rests but also the relationship between sound and silence" (Fujie, 2002; 343). *Ma* is subtle and requires years of experience to understand well.

In most respects *hauta* and *kouta* are very similar: they are usually one to three minutes long and the lyrics cover similar themes expressed in dense, somewhat ambiguous poetry and packed with double meanings. The double meanings are often

[16] A number of recordings of *kouta* and *hauta* songs incorporate other instruments such as drums and flutes.

[17] One exception to this is the folk songs of the Tsugaru region which sometimes lack a regular pulse.

erotic but sophisticated and subtly expressed. They are so subtle that even Japanese people can occasionally overlook them (Fujie, 2002). Although the terms *kouta* and *hauta* are sometimes used interchangeably, the *kouta shamisen* has a slightly smaller body and a narrower neck than the *shamisen* used in *hauta* and is plucked with the fingers rather than using a plectrum made from wood or ivory. *Kouta* are somewhat more closely tied to the world of the *geisha* (Dalby, 2000). The *kouta shamisen* produces a much softer sound suited to intimate gatherings such as those held in the teahouses of the geisha.

There are two characteristics of the basic physical stance of *nihon-buyō* which distinguish it very much from ballet and folk dance traditions. According to Gunji (1970; 70):

> Western dance is an attempt to express man's desire for freedom by striving to transcend the earth and escape into the universe. In Japanese dance, on the other hand, the dancer borrows the aspect of a god and hovers over the earth, blessing it and expressing love for it.

The basic stance in *nihon-buyō* reflects this closeness to the earth: the "energy is focussed on the center of balance in the lower torso" and the knees are continually bent slightly, while the torso is maintained in a perpendicular line and the feet "embrace the earth" (Sellers-Young, 1993; 36). Japanese dance also generally uses rather restricted space in comparison to Western dance styles.

Nihon-buyō is somewhat formulaic. There are named movements and patterns which reoccur in many different dances. The term for these "patterns of performance behavior" is *kata* (Keister, 2001; 57). *Kata* literally means "form" and *kata* are "pre-determined patterns of action divided into discrete and detailed units which are pieced together to constitute entire songs, dances, tea ceremonies or karate routines" (2001; 57). The formulaic nature of dances means that experienced dancers may learn the choreography of a dance relatively quickly.

These patterns can generally be classified as belonging to one of three separate movement styles: *mai*, *odori*, and *furi*. *Mai* are "fluid arrhythmic abstract movements associated with classical forms of theatre such as *noh*" (Sellers-Young, 1993; 37). The

term *odori* refers to movements appropriated and incorporated into classical dance from lively group folk dances including *bon-odori*, semi-religious *nembutsu odori*, and the more urban *furyu odori* (Gunji, 1970). Finally, *furi* movements are "realistic pantomime" (Sellers-Young, 1993; 38). These stylized movements represent actions from daily life or the "gestural style of different characters" (Sellers-Young, 1993; 38). These different movement styles are combined in each dance and make up the movement vocabulary of classical dance.

One aspect of classical Japanese dance that is quite distinct is that both male and female dancers learn masculine and feminine dances. Because the government banned women from performing on the *kabuki* stage in 1629, female impersonators replaced female actors/dancers.[18] Kabuki actors who specialize in feminine style dance are called *onnagata*. When *kabuki* dance began to become popular with amateur women, the tradition of learning masculine and feminine roles continued. Although women do masculine dances, there are some modifications made for women in the name of modesty. Some Japanese dances have male and female versions such as the dance *Hakusen* (White Fan) or even require the dancer to switch back and forth between masculine and feminine style in the same dance. The basic difference between the styles is that in feminine dances the feet are turned in and the knees are kept close together while in masculine dances the feet are turned out in a way similar to the basic stance of ballet. These differences will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter four.

The term *shin-buyō* is usually translated as new dance or modern dance and designates dances that developed in the 20th century. These "new dances" are set to a variety of different musical styles including Western style settings of Japanese folk songs, *enka* songs, and many other types of music. *Enka* is one of the most common genres for dance. It is a type of sentimental Japanese popular song that combines elements of Western popular music such as saxophone or electric guitar solos with characteristic Japanese vocal styles.[19] *Shin-buyō*, however, can be choreographed to

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[18] See Ernst (1956) and Morinaga, (2002) for a historical account of the transition from female dancers to female impersonators.

[19] This genre is most popular with middle-aged and older fans and songs tend to be about unhappy love or nostalgia for traditional Japanese lifestyles.

almost any genre of music: Einojo-*sensei* taught us a dance he choreographed to *That's the Way It Is* by Celine Dion. New, more modern choreography set to Japanese classical music is also considered *shin-buyō*.

Shin-buyō combines the movement vocabulary of classical dance with movements created in modern *nihon-buyō* style (Sellers-Young, 1993). These more modern movements have been influenced to a certain extent by Western dance styles. Sellers-Young (1993; 45) notes four characteristics of *shin-buyō* movements that are slightly different from classical dance: the knees are not as bent; body postures are lengthened; arm gestures tend to reach further into space; and the hands are less often hidden in the sleeves of the *kimono*. In *shin-buyō* the differences between masculine and feminine dance style are somewhat less pronounced; rather, the feet maintain a more neutral position.

Minnyo-buyō are folk dances from various regions of Japan that have been refined for performance on the stage. The movement style of folk dance is more similar to *bon-odori* and movements often imitate the actions of fishermen, farmers or other laborers. The music for such dances usually features Japanese traditional instruments, rather than Western instruments but may also be syncretic. The *minnyo-buyō* dances done by *Wakaba-kai* were taught by Nakamura-*sensei*.

Wakaba-kai originally formed to perform *O-bon* festival dance at the Heritage Festival. These dances, now referred to as *bon-odori*, developed as part of the celebration of the *O-bon* Festival. *O-bon* has been translated as the Festival of Souls, the Feast of the Dead, or the Festival of Lanterns (Van Zile, 1982).[20] It is a three-day Buddhist festival to honour the dead and is celebrated in Japan from mid-July to mid-August. Although these dances developed to celebrate *O-bon*, in the diaspora they are not only performed at *O-bon* celebrations but are sometimes staged for audiences at festivals such as Edmonton's Heritage Festival and Winnipeg's Folkorama Festival.[21] In Japan, *bon-odori* is not something that is learned in *nihon-buyō* lessons, but in the diaspora it is an important style of dance for many dance groups.

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[20] The "O" in O-bon is an hoporific prefix.

[21] Even in Japan, *bon-odori* may be performed for secular occasions.

Bon-odori, compared to the other styles of dance is easy to participate in for a number of reasons. *Bon-odori* combines Japanese lyrics, tunes and traditional instruments with Western instruments and musical styles. For instance, the influence of Western popular dance and music can be seen in the dance *Tokyo Ondo* which features both the cha cha cha step and box step. Part of the reason that *bon-odori* is so accessible is that it is very repetitive. Dances usually consist of a sixteen beat sequence of movements that is repeated for three to five minutes. *Bon-odori* is also a little easier to do because the dances are usually performed in a large group. Dancers form a large circle and move in clockwise or counter-clockwise direction, depending on the dance.

Wakaba-kai studies and perform dances from all four of these dance styles. Einojo-*sensei* prefers the classical dance repertoire but says that for many of his students in Japan, classical dance is difficult. In fact in Japan there has been an increase in dance schools that focus exclusively on *shin-buyō*. Einojo-*sensei* attributes this interest in *shin-buyō* to the fact that Japanese traditional music is difficult for modern Japanese people: "But classical music is difficult: there is *ma*, listening to *shamisen*, and hard to understand words but they know *Kita no Daichi* (a popular song) and everyone can do it." He also said: "The Japanese music we are talking about [classical], if you listen to it one time you don't understand but when you listen again and again it becomes interesting...because the more you chew the better the flavour becomes." In contrast, Einojo-*sensei* described *shin-buyō* as *hairiyasui* (easy to enter or accessible). In his opinion, most people know *bon-odori* and when they watch *nihonbuyō* on the stage they think it is beautiful and want to do it but it is too difficult so they begin studying *shin-buyō*. Because *shin-buyō* is a more accessible way to begin dance than classical dance, Einojo-*sensei* said he probably teaches 20% *shin-buyō* and 80% classical dance.

Conclusion

Wakaba-kai's transnational relationship to Einojo-*sensei* has resulted in significant changes. First, because he is now their headmaster, they have access to a wealth of classical and *shin-buyō* dances as well as his expertise as a classical dance

teacher. This same link implicates them in the power relations of the hierarchically arranged *iemoto* system and the obligations this entails. Learning the types of dances that Einojo-*sensei* teaches has transformed the group. Before they met him, they never did solo dances but now learn solo classical and *shin-buyō* dances in addition to group dances. Classical dances are more difficult because the music is more challenging, dances are generally longer, through-composed and require the dancer to learn highly differentiated masculine and feminine styles and more constrained, stylized movements (as opposed to the more naturalistic movements of *shin-buyō*). To learn these difficult dances and prepare for formal performances, the group has had to take dance far more seriously than before. They now meet every Thursday throughout the year and students practice at home.

CHAPTER 3: *NIHON-BUYŌ* AND THE MAINTENANCE OF ETHNIC IDENTITY IN THE DIASPORA

"Since I can't speak Japanese, I may as well dance Japanese"
(Edmonton, 1993b).

How is a distinctive Japanese Canadian identity created and maintained in the diaspora by the members of *Wakaba-kai*? In classic conceptions of diaspora, such as the Jewish, Armenian and Greek diasporas, the memory of forced dispersal from the homeland, and a perpetual longing to return, often fostered by discrimination in the host country, are distinctive aspects of identity. Within *Wakaba-kai*, a teleology of return to Japan, or even to the West Coast, is not significant: none of the members of *Wakaba-kai* now feel that she would like to return to either of those "homelands."

Diasporas may be oriented around goals other than physical return to the homeland (Clifford, 1997; 250). Ghosh (1989) suggests that the South Asian diaspora is focussed around recreating culture in various locations, rather than a desire to return to a place. Clifford (1997; 250) points out that decentred, lateral connections to the homeland may be as significant as a desire to return and that a "shared, ongoing history of displacement, suffering, adaptation or resistance may be as important as the projection of a specific origin." The Caribbean diaspora exemplifies such lateral connections to multiple origins (Hall, 1999).

I argue that for the Japanese diaspora in Canada, as it is represented by the members of *Wakaba-kai*, diaspora can best be defined as a sociocultural formation of people who maintain a distinctive cultural identity through "real and/or symbolic ties to some original 'homeland'" (Ang, 1993; 35). These ties to the homeland, however, are not just transnational in nature but are concerned with a political struggle "to define the local, as distinctive community, in historical contexts of displacement" (Clifford, 1997; 252). By the accounts of *Wakaba-kai* members, overt exclusion and discrimination do not currently affect them a great deal in Canada. But the history of racism towards Japanese Canadians that found its peak expression in the internment and relocation of

Japanese Canadians during and after WWII is a definitive aspect of Japanese Canadian identity. Thus in conjunction with affective connections to a homeland, a distinct community identity is also defined negatively by experiences of discrimination in the host county (Clifford, 1997; 256).

For the members of *Wakaba-kai*, participation in *nihon-buyō* plays a part in the creation and maintenance of a distinctive Japanese Canadian identity in the diaspora. Participation in Japanese dance is one of the ways that *Wakaba-kai* members forge and maintain social, affective and material connections to Japan which help to distinguish the Edmonton Japanese community in the multi-cultural context of Canada. These extra-national connections help to maintain identification with Japan so Japanese Canadians may, as Gilroy (1987) suggests, "live inside, [Canada] with a difference" (Gilroy 1987; 251).

In this chapter I explore the way *nihon-buyō* differentially relates to the ethnic identities of *Wakaba-kai* members. Due to various factors, the two generations represented in *Wakaba-kai* experience ethnic identity quite differently and thus dance has different significance to each member. Specifically I consider the influence of the increasingly transnational dimension of dance to the members of the group. How does participation in *Wakaba-kai* help the members to live inside Canada as Japanese Canadians? First, I will consider some specific differences between the two generations, then analyze how the members of *Wakaba-kai* describe the significance of dance to their ethnic identities.

Generation and Cultural Continuity: the *Sansei* and *Shin-issei*

The Japanese diaspora in Canada is not homogenous. There are many differences among Japanese Canadians: gender, class, region of origin in Japan, period of immigration, generation and many others. *Wakaba-kai* reflects a number of these differences but period of immigration and generation are of particular significance. They strongly influence the way that *Wakaba-kai* members experience ethnic identity in Canada and how dance, as an emotional and material connection to Japan and the Japanese Canadian community relates to the identities of *Wakaba-kai* members.

There are many differences between the *Sansei* and the *Shin-issei*. Perhaps most significant here is the difference in paradigms of ethnic identity and affiliation. There is concern that the *Sansei* are losing their identity as Japanese Canadians, but this does not appear to be a major issue for the *Shin-issei*. Gordon's (1964) concept of structural assimilation has been used by various authors to describe the *Sansei* (Fugita and O'Brien, 1991; Levine and Rhodes, 1981; Tamura, 1994) because *Sansei* have found "large-scale entrance into cliques, clubs, and institutions of [the] host society on [a] primary group level" (Gordon, 1964; 71). Makabe (1998) has even gone so far as to suggest that Canadian *Sansei*, in general, have assimilated so much into Canadian society that at best they may have symbolic or nominal ethnicity and may be at worst "indifferent" towards their Japanese Canadian heritage.

It is widely agreed that third generation Japanese Canadians and Americans are more similar to the non-Japanese majority than to their Nisei parents. One significant way in which *Sansei* differ from their parents is in the intensity of interaction and number of social connections to other Japanese Canadians. The results of Makabe's (1998) research indicate that *Sansei* have more significant social connections to non-Japanese Canadians than their parents. Fifty percent of Makabe's (1998) *Sansei* respondents did not have a single friend or associate of Japanese descent. A Statistics Canada report on mixed unions indicated that Japanese Canadians were the most likely of any visible minority group to marry a non-Japanese person (Statistics Canada, 2004). According to Makabe (1998) exogamy decreases the likelihood of participation in the Japanese community. Also, most *Sansei* do not feel that active participation in the Japanese community is important to their lives (Makabe, 1998). *Sansei* may, or may not, use existing programs but they tend to be under-represented in Japanese voluntary associations and community leadership positions which are instead maintained mainly by the Nisei generation and the *Shin-issei* (Makabe, 1998). Another significant difference is that most *Sansei* Japanese Canadians do not speak Japanese while most of the Nisei and all of the *Shin-issei* do speak Japanese. Loss of language is a particularly consequential measure of acculturation because so much cultural information is encoded in language.

Makabe's (1998) research concludes that *Sansei*, in general, can be described as having situational or symbolic ethnicity (Gans, 1996). Members of an ethnic group can be said to have symbolic ethnicity when they feel a sense of affiliation to a perceived shared culture or to common cultural symbols, yet are behaviorally assimilated into the mainstream. Fleras and Elliot (1996) say that, "involvement and frequency are not important; what is salient is an identification with that ethnicity and the symbols associated with its distinctiveness" (Fleras and Elliot, 1996; 179). Members may participate in community groups or activities but only as much as the experience is positive and does not impose too many constraints or demands on them (Fleras and Elliot, 1996).

There have been a variety of attempts to account for the changing patterns of ethnic identification and affiliation of third generation Japanese Canadians. Montero (1980) emphasizes the pursuit of assimilation for the sake of socio-economic mobility as a cause of the changes in *Sansei* identification with and involvement in the community. In contrast Makabe (1998) argues that external forces are responsible for the dispersal of the Japanese community and the resulting changes in *Sansei* identity. Specifically, she cites the cumulative effects of racism and the government's post-WWII policy of assimilation as the most influential.

The combination of extreme racism and the government's forced dispersal of Japanese Canadians have had two results. First, dispersal scattered the very dense and thriving pre-war Japanese community on the West Coast and broke up established support systems. Secondly many Nisei internalized the government policy of assimilation and believed that the only way to live in Canada and avoid the problems of the past was to comply by not congregating in ethnic neighborhoods, by keeping silent about internment and relocation and encouraging their children to be very "Canadian" (Adachi, 1976; Makabe, 1998). Because of this many *Sansei* were raised with little or no contact with other Japanese Canadians beyond their immediate families. As a result, most of their friends are non-Japanese and there is a tendency towards exogamous marriage. Even in the post-redress period and at a time when the Canadian

government's multi-cultural policy toward diversity encourages expression of ethnic difference most *Sansei* do not get involved in the Japanese community.

Unlike the *Sansei* generation, the *Shin-issei* appear to have a very secure sense of their Japanese identity. None of the *Shin-issei* members of *Wakaba-kai* have expressed any concern over losing their sense of connection to Japan. This does not mean, however, that the *Shin-issei* ladies only feel a sense of affiliation to Japan and Japanese culture or that they exist in a bounded transnational Japanese community. My research with the *Shin-issei* members of *Wakaba-kai* suggests that, although they maintain many transnational connections to Japan and a great deal of their social activities and occupations are focussed within the Japanese Canadian community, they could best be described as bi-cultural. They strongly identify with both Japan and Canada, have significant social relationships with people in Japan and Canada, speak Japanese and English and are familiar with the social norms of Canada as well as Japan.

In a conversation over lunch one day I asked them if they thought of themselves as Canadian or Japanese and several women mentioned that they notice how they are attached to both Japan and Canada when they watch sporting events. When they watch the Olympics they cheer for both Canada and Japan. Mineko told the story of how her family went to see a baseball game in the United States. One team was Canadian and the other was American but the American team had a Japanese pitcher. As Mineko and her family watched the game, they found themselves rooting for and cheering for the Canadian team *and*, because of the Japanese pitcher, the American team.

Unlike the pre-WWII first generation, because of increasing globalization, they are able to easily maintain many connections to Japan. Most of the *Shin-issei* members return to Japan once a year, or once every several years. They communicate regularly with friends and family in Japan, order goods from Japan by catalogue and receive magazines. Many have NHK (Japan Broadcasting Corporation) on satellite television and are instantly able to connect to Japan and maintain their knowledge of popular culture and current affairs.

Most of the *Shin-issei* members who do, or have, worked outside the home have tended to work in businesses somehow related to Japan or the Japanese community. Yet

through those jobs, many have made connections with non-Japanese people as well. Nakano-san works in a Japanese restaurant, Mrs. Frueh worked for the Consulate-General of Japan at Edmonton before she retired and Kyoko used to work for a tour company that catered largely to Japanese tourists to Alberta. Natsuko used to work for the Alberta Research Council until 1992, then started her own technical translation company with another *Shin-issei* Japanese woman. She is also a member of the Edmonton Japanese Business Association.

In Canada, the Japanese Canadian community is a primary social group for the *Shin-issei* members and they participate in other Japanese Canadian voluntary associations. Nakano-san is the leader and one of the founding members of the Karaoke club. In addition to being in the Karaoke club and taking dance, Mineko studies calligraphy. Mrs. Frueh teaches dance and Chigiri-e.[22] They all attend and sometimes help to organize a variety of events held at the Edmonton Japanese Community Centre (EJCC). Many of their closest friends, social contacts and work colleagues are Japanese.

Most of the *Shin-issei* members have been residents of Canada for more than thirty years. They have raised their children here and have established relationships with their neighbors and other non-Japanese Canadians. They are linked to the non-Japanese Edmonton community through family and hobbies. Two members of the group are married to non-Japanese men. Many of the *Shin-issei* ladies' children have married non-Japanese Canadians and their grandchildren are of mixed heritage. Many of them attend local health or fitness clubs and one of Natsuko's serious hobbies is playing badminton in a competitive league for seniors that is not related to the Japanese community at all.

They all speak English, though at varying levels, and have become accustomed to Canadian norms of communication. For instance, in Japan, it is good manners to speak modestly about oneself but in Canada people may interpret such modesty as a lack of knowledge, skill or confidence. Natsuko gave the example that in Japan if she said "I don't really play tennis," it would be interpreted to mean that she is a competent player. If she said the same thing in Canada people would assume that in fact she did not know how to play at all and start giving her advice. Because that kind of modest

[22] See glossary of Japanese terms.

understatement is misinterpreted Natsuko now chooses a more direct style of expression in English. Many *Shin-issei* members of the group have at times expressed a preference for the "Canadian" way of thinking and doing things.

Dance, Identity and the *Sansei* Members of *Wakaba-kai*

The *Sansei* members of *Wakaba-kai*, in most respects, fit the general profile of *Sansei* Canadians described by Makabe (1998): their families have experienced internment; they have all married outside of the Japanese community; they do not speak Japanese; and they appear to conform to many Anglo-Canadian norms. The *Sansei* members of *Wakaba-kai* mostly have non-Japanese friends and feel very comfortable around non-Japanese Canadians.

Terese, Ann and Marj's participation in Japanese dance differentiates them from other *Sansei* Japanese Canadians. Not only do they participate in dance but, as I will show, their participation has led to a stronger connection to Japan and their Japanese heritage as well as increasing involvement in the Japanese Canadian community. This increasing identification and involvement is an example of "new ethnicity,"a situation in which the intensity of ethnic identification increases either in strength of feeling and/or practical involvement within a multi-cultural context (Nahachewsky, 2002).

It is true that many of the *Sansei* members of *Wakaba-kai* believe that internment and relocation have negatively affected them and their families and several *Sansei* members of *Wakaba-kai* recall incidents where they have experienced racism. Yet, the *Sansei* members have not faced the levels of hostility and exclusion which may have encouraged their parents' heavy involvement in the Japanese community. *Sansei Wakaba-kai* members do not have to be involved in the community. In fact, their inability to communicate well in Japanese and factors such as geographic dispersal could even discourage them from doing so. Why then do the *Sansei* members show signs of new ethnicity while other *Sansei* do not? How does dance relate to the increasing intensity of their sense of Japanese identity? Has the involvement of Einojo-*sensei* as a connection to Japan and traditional dance, influenced new ethnicity in the *Sansei*?

The families of the *Sansei* members of *Wakaba-kai* all have a history of internment and relocation. As is consistent with the experiences of the *Sansei* interviewed by Makabe (1998), Terese and Ann have both said that their parents did not talk about the war years and rarely mentioned internment or any of the problems they had encountered. Until the Redress movement[23] began, Terese did not know about the history of Japanese Canadians and had had no idea that her family had been interned. She said "you hear of parents saying, you know, when I was this age, this is what we had to put up with or whatever and tell you how your situation isn't as bad as you think but never, ever, not one peep." There was almost total silence about her parents' experiences during the war years.

Similarly, Ann knows little about her family history. Both sides of Ann's family were interned. All that she knows is that her father was part of a work crew in a camp in Ontario and that her grandparents spent the war in a camp in the B.C. interior, called Tashme. Ann's mother and uncle did not go to the camp because they had an Aunt in Edmonton who could take them. It was only by accident that Ann discovered her mother's family had lived in Tashme. One day she watched a documentary with her parents about internment that showed footage from Tashme and her father thought he saw her mother walk by in the film. They think that her mother must have been visiting her family, but Ann never really found out if it was true.

Ann and Terese agreed that because of the war, their parents wanted them to be very Canadian as they were growing up. Terese said, "It's like they wanted to start all over again and they were going to just do it right this time. Integrate more..." (Edmonton, 2003b). Ann and Terese believe that because their parents wanted them to be Canadian, teaching them to speak Japanese was not a priority. Terese says, "My parents brought us all up to be very Canadian and they thought that we didn't have to learn Japanese because we were in Canada and it was not necessary and that was why they didn't teach us Japanese" (Edmonton, 2003b).

Although brought up to be "very Canadian," Terese and Ann's families were quite active in the small Edmonton Japanese community. Ann's mother played the

[23] The redress movement sought compensation for the internment of Japanese Canadians during WWII.

piano at community events and her father was a member of the Karaoke Club. Terese's parents are still involved in the Edmonton Japanese Canadian Association (EJCA) and her father is a long time member of the Karaoke Club. Their parents always encouraged Terese and Ann to study dance. Ann said that she was sure her mother had been happy to see her studying dance and Terese says that she enjoys dance partly because she knows how happy it makes her parents.

Throughout their lives, Terese and Ann's involvement in the community have fluctuated. In university Ann became interested in, as she put it, "all things Japanese" as part of a desire to understand her roots (Edmonton, 2002). During her undergraduate degree she took dance for two years with Mrs. Miyagishima. She returned to study with Mrs. Frueh after she was married and before she had children. When she began to have a family she did not participate in any voluntary organizations and really relied on her parents as a connection to the community and her heritage. She says because her husband is not Japanese and she is *Sansei* that when her parents passed away in 1992, she lost touch with the community. She had always meant to return to Japanese dance at some point but her lack of connection meant that she did not know about Einojo-*sensei* or any of the dance group activities until she got a phone call from Mrs. Frueh.

Becoming involved in dance in 2002 after a long absence has been a very meaningful way for her to reconnect to her ethnic identity and to the community. She described returning to Japanese dance as finding a part of herself that she had forgotten and says that it is like going back in time. Not only does she enjoy the familiar feeling of doing Japanese dance, but at lessons and performances she has the opportunity to meet with people she knew as a child or people who knew her parents. Several of the *Shin-issei* members of *Wakaba-kai* knew her parents. When Ann started dance again Mrs. Nakano told her that she used to sing *karaoke* with her father. Mrs. Freuh remembers Ann's mother because she used to play the piano at community events. In addition to spending time with other Japanese people, being involved in dance means that she gets to eat Japanese food like her parents used to make. She said, "So when I go to Japanese dance, I get this great food, you know, that tastes like my dad would make

that I can't make. I can try and try but it's just not like Mineko's fish and stuff (Edmonton, 2002)"

Terese began dance at the age of fourteen and continued on and off for many years, eventually taking about five years off when she was running her own business. After she sold the business, she was able to return to dance in 1999 and has been steadily involved since then. Terese has also said Japanese dance is important to her not only because it has linked her to her culture but because it has connected her to a very positive feeling of pride in her Japanese heritage. Because her father was in the military, she moved around a great deal when she was quite young and it was not until she was twelve years old that the family settled in Edmonton. Until she moved to Edmonton, she had had little contact with Japanese culture or any sort of Japanese community other than her extended family and she had always considered herself to be an average Canadian.

It was only when she began going to school in Edmonton, that she was made aware of the fact that being Japanese made her different. For the first time she was teased for being Japanese. She said, "It was in this city and it was very hurtful and very confusing because up to then, I was normal and very Canadian. Suddenly I was told that I wasn't very Canadian and I'm weird" (Edmonton, 2003b). These experiences resulted in her temporarily feeling very negative about her identity as a Japanese Canadian. She said, "I went through that stage where I really wished I wasn't Japanese because I had been teased, and how awful to be teased, and it's all because I'm Japanese, and what a curse!" (Edmonton, 2003b).

Two years after moving to Edmonton, Terese's father came home one day and told Terese and her sister that Mrs. Miyagishima was offering dance lessons and they both decided to join. Participation in Japanese dance helped Terese feel more positive about being Japanese. She said, "So Japanese dance was kind of good for me because then I met other Japanese people and it was okay to be Japanese" (Edmonton, 2003b). The older girls who she took dance with also provided positive images, "I was this tiny girl and these other ladies were going to university and, you know, in their late teenage

years and sooo beautiful" (Edmonton, 2003b). Mrs. Freuh has also been a role model for her:

> I can't describe it. She's even more than a mentor because I admire her so much. So when I was younger and dancing with her, I had always secretly wanted to dance just like her...yeah, it was kind of like my personal goal...one day I'm going to dance just like her (Edmonton, 2003b).

Interestingly, the first classical recital in 1999 was very special for Terese partly because the classical style taught by Einojo-*sensei* brought her closer to being able to dance like Mrs. Frueh. The members of *Wakaba-kai* continue to be Terese's only Japanese friends.

The *Sansei* members have indicated that dance is valuable to them variously as a connection to the past, to pride in their ethnicity, and to the local Japanese community. Dance has also linked them affectively, materially and socially to Japan in several ways. Terese, Ann and Marj all have some family in Japan but do not regularly go there to visit. Ann went to Japan for one month when she was in university but Terese has never been before. The transnational dimension of *Wakaba-kai* is quite significant to the *Sansei* as a link to Japan.

Even without considering the importance of Einojo-*sensei* there is a transnational dimension to *Wakaba-kai*. The common tendency of *Shin-issei* to travel to Japan and bring back various food or dance items as well as the fact that Mrs. Frueh orders costumes and dance properties from Japan by catalogue have established a connection to Japan which the *Sansei* members find significant. Ann has said that because the *Shin-issei* ladies are always "winging back and forth" that Japan does not seem so far away. When *Shin-issei* members return from Japan they usually bring back some traditional Japanese snacks to share at dance lessons or they may pick up certain dance items for other members of the group. These food gifts from Japan seem more significant to the *Sansei*. For instance, one person brought back some rice cracker snacks that were packaged so as to resemble a small wooden Japanese doll, called a *kokeshi* doll. Everyone thought that they were very cute but the *Shin-issei* members ate theirs while Marj and Ann made a point of saving it and mentioned months later that

they still had not eaten it because it was too cute. As a material connection to Japan, the rice cracker snack held more significance to the *Sansei* members.

Since Einojo-*sensei* has been involved, the transnational dimension has increased. The *Sansei* members now have a direct student-teacher relationship with Einojo-*sensei* and this links them within the hierarchical *iemoto* system and its traditions. Terese, Ann and Marj have all said that learning traditional dance from the *Iemoto* of a school in Japan has been an incredible experience and feel very lucky to have the opportunity. The first time Einojo-*sensei* came to Edmonton Terese remembers being very excited and nervous about meeting him. In the time he spent preparing them for the first major recital in 1999 she developed a strong respect for him so that she was very motivated to do well and to please him. When he left she was very sad, "a lot of us were so sad. It's like we had gotten really attached to him." Terese said that she may consider taking the test to receive a stage name. If she does so, she will have an even greater connection to Japan and Einojo-*sensei*. She will receive a new Japanese name to mark her transition to official disciple and a formal place in the lineage.

The social connection to Einojo-*sensei* has to some extent also influenced an even stronger affective feeling about dance. Once, while watching Einojo-*sensei* dance Terese had a strong reaction. She said,

> I was watching him dance and something inside me told me that if I was living in Japan, I would have been a dancer. It was just that one split second I was watching him and I thought I would have been a dancer, definitely no question about it (Edmonton, 2003b).

Terese appears to link dance so closely to her Japanese identity that it is as though her essential Japanese self is a dancer.

Participation in Japanese dance has led to an increase in Terese's pride in her Japanese heritage and reconnected Ann with her past and the Japanese community. But their involvement goes beyond the individual study of dance. The *Sansei* members dance in a variety of performances and help to organize events. Usually, it is Mrs. Frueh who organizes rehearsals and receives requests for performances and Kyoko is the person who manages *Wakaba-kai*'s inventory of costumes. At the 2002 recital, of which

I was a part, all members of the group were needed to organize the event and the *Sansei* played a very important role.

Participation in dance has led them to be more active in the community and to learn more about other aspects of Japanese culture. Both Marj and Ann, in addition to Kyoko and Nakano-san, have been volunteering for the Edmonton Japanese Community Association School Program. They do several presentations a month about Japanese dance and culture for Edmonton students. In 2003 Terese and Ann began studying Japanese together with a local teacher. They are not just users of established services or people who attend events, but very active participants in planning *Wakaba-kai* events and other functions. Increased participation in such events means that all of the members of the group spend more time together.

Nihon-buyō, Identity and the *Shin-issei* Members of *Wakaba-kai*

Dance relates to the ethnic identities of *Shin-issei* members in a variety of ways that are different from the *Sansei*. For the *Shin-issei*, dance is not primarily a means to resist a loss of ethnic identity in the diaspora because their sense of Japanese identity is rather secure regardless of their participation in dance. Because Japanese dance is only one of many social, material and affective connections to Japan and the Japanese Canadian community the *Shin-issei* members of *Wakaba-kai* do not rely on dance as a connection to their Japanese identity in the same way as the *Sansei* members. There are many reasons why the *Shin-issei* members chose to study dance, several of which appear to have little to do with being Japanese.

It seems that Mineko, Nakano-san and Natsuko do not see Japanese dance as intimately related to their ethnic identities. None of them began studying dance out of a focussed desire to learn a Japanese art or in order to teach Canadians about Japanese culture. Mineko had enjoyed doing *bon-odori* in Japan and began participating in Heritage Festival *bon-odori* because her husband was on the EJCA Heritage Festival committee one year and they needed dancers. To her it was just a fun social event. In Japan Nakano-san's interest was in track and field sports but pursuing those sports was no longer an option because she had had back surgery in 1999. She needed to do some

exercise because she is diabetic and believed that dance was a good form of light exercise. Since she enjoys physical activity and had a great deal of free time because she was no longer working for the Canadian Research Council, Natsuko joined dance in 1992.

Although they do not directly link Japanese dance to their ethnic identity, it is interesting that Mineko, Nakano-san and Natsuko have only begun studying traditional arts since they have been in Canada. In modern Japan, dance and other traditional arts represent an essential Japaneseness in opposition to modernization and, as I discussed in Chapter two, in comparison to Western classical arts, are in a marginalized position. Mineko and Natsuko have said that one of the things they are very happy about is that by studying dance they have learned how to put on a *kimono*. In Japan, unless a woman studies a traditional art, she will only wear *kimono* for several special events in her life such as the coming of age ceremony at age twenty or at her wedding. For those events, one usually specifically goes to a professional *kimono* dresser. By studying dance and learning how to dress in *kimono* they have gained very specialized traditional knowledge and skills that most women in Japan do not have. In this sense, they are more "Japanese" than Japanese people living in Japan.

Mrs. Frueh and Kyoko are the only members who studied traditional arts in Japan. Unlike the other *Shin-issei* members, Kyoko and Mrs. Frueh have both said that one of the reasons they value dance is because they enjoy showing Japanese culture to Canadians and to the Japanese community. For Kyoko especially, dance was important first as a way of transmitting Japanese culture to her children and then to Canadians and the *Sansei* generation specifically. She initially got involved in dance through her children because she thought it was a good opportunity to keep Japanese culture in her family. For years it was her children who did dance. She only began to study dance when there were few children and they needed adults to round out the numbers for the Heritage Festival performance. She is happy that the *Sansei* members of the group have a chance to learn about Japanese culture through dance. In lessons Kyoko says that she does things the Japanese way and does not worry about adjusting. She suggests that

dance lessons are thus a good place for the *Sansei* to learn by observing the actions of the *Shin-issei* members.

Both Mrs. Frueh and Kyoko have indicated to a certain extent that the training they had in Japan, in addition to studying dance in Edmonton, has helped them to find a social niche within the Japanese community and Canadian society. Mrs. Frueh said that performing Japanese dance at festivals in Canada has provided many opportunities for her to see different types of dance from all over the world. At other performances she has had opportunities to meet Japanese dignitaries and local politicians. Kyoko found moving to Canada and being away from her family very difficult and said that taking her children to *bon-odori* was a nice way to meet other people in the Japanese community.

Dance and other cultural activities have been significant to Kyoko as a way to express her sense of pride in Japanese culture and to feel less marginalized as a visible minority in Canada. She feels that as a Japanese person in Canada she always has to adjust to the "Canadian way" (Edmonton, 2003a). Dance lessons and performances are situations in which she does not need to conform to Canadian norms but is able to show her culture to Canadians and feel very proud. When she first moved to Canada and her children were in elementary school, doing presentations at her children's school made her feel valued and in part made the adjustment to life in Canada just a little easier.

Dance is not the only opportunity the *Shin-issei* members have to socialize with other Japanese Canadians but they are friends and they value dance, in part, for their relationships with each other. Natsuko said that it is a warm and comfortable feeling to spend time with other Japanese Canadians. She values the fact that she has a great deal in common with Mrs. Frueh: they are about the same age and are both from the Kansai region[24] of Japan so they speak the same dialect and have a similar way of thinking. The *Shin-issei* and *Sansei* members of the group sometimes celebrate each other's birthdays,

[24] The Kansai region is an area of Japan on the central island of Honshū that is south of Tokyo and encompasses Kyoto, Osaka and other cities. This area is often defined in opposition to the Kanto region (the Tokyo area) and differences include everything from the dialect of Japanese spoken to the kind of soup base used in noodle dishes.

send cards and get well gifts if someone is ill, and generally celebrate major events in each other's lives.

Interestingly, the value of dance as a social activity seems to have changed, at least for some *Shin-issei* members, since they began studying classical dance with Einojo-*sensei*. Mineko said before Einojo-*sensei* started teaching them more challenging solo and classical dances, dance was more of a fun social activity. Now, although it is still fun and social, because dance is more challenging and they are doing bigger performances, she is more motivated to participate for the sake of studying dance itself. Most of the other *Shin-issei* members have said that they too find dance even more rewarding because they enjoy the challenge of classical and solo dance.

Analysis

Japanese dance connects the members of *Wakaba-kai* not only to Japan but to the Japanese Canadian community. The significance of this connection, however, varies widely according to generational differences as well as individual circumstances. My research suggests that as a link to ethnic identity participation in Japanese dance is far more significant among the *Sansei*, than the *Shin-issei* members of the group. Ann credits participation in dance with reconnecting her to her Japanese Canadian identity and Terese says it has made her feel very positive about her Japanese ethnicity. For the *Shin-issei* members dance is less directly related to ethnic identity.

The reason that *nihon-buyō* relates so differently to the ethnic identities of *Wakaba-kai* members is influenced by the differences between the generations. The *Sansei* generation has been shaped by the experiences of their parents' internment and relocation during and after WWII. The dispersal and assimilation policies of the government have led to limited opportunities to participate in community and the loss of Japanese language in the third generation. The *Sansei* members feel a sense of loss and for them Japanese dance is a way to maintain a link to their culture.

The aspects of Japanese Canadian history which have discouraged most *Sansei* from participating in the community have also affected the *Sansei* members of *Wakaba-kai*. They do not speak Japanese; they are married to non-Japanese; their parents have

experienced internment; and they have few, if any Japanese friends outside of *Wakaba-kai*. Through participation in dance Terese, Ann, and Marj are getting more and more involved in the Japanese community. Courtesy of Mrs. Frueh, and Einojo-*sensei*, they have the opportunity to connect through dance. Their involvement in dance shows how, despite negative outside forces, agency is a significant factor in the maintenance and intensification of ethnic identity in a multi-cultural society.

For the *Shin-issei* dance is only one of many social connections to Japan and the Japanese community. Because of increasing ease of travel and the way that satellite television and other media transnationally link the *Shin-issei* to Japan, they are able to maintain relationships with family and friends in Japan and keep updated on contemporary Japanese culture. Also, compared to the *Sansei*, the *Shin-issei* members have Japanese and Canadian cultural competence: they speak Japanese and English and understand Canadian and Japanese social norms. Thus the *Shin-issei* members do not feel a great concern over the persistence of their ethnic identities and relate to dance differently.

Three of the *Shin-issei* members, do not feel that dance relates to their ethnicity in a direct way. They enjoy dance mostly because they love the challenge of learning and partly because it is a good opportunity to exercise and socialize with people from a common background. For the *Shin-issei* members who had studied dance or traditional arts in Japan, the knowledge they gained in Japan is a kind of cultural capital in the Japanese Canadian community and the non-Japanese community which has helped them establish a social niche for themselves in Canada. They feel valued for their specialized knowledge of Japanese culture. During dance, rather than having to adjust to Canadian norms, Japanese language and culture are the norm.

Has the involvement of Einojo-*sensei* changed the way dance relates to the identities of the members of *Wakaba-kai*? Participation in Japanese dance has led to new ethnicity in the *Sansei* members. Long before Einojo-*sensei*, dance increased the intensity of Terese and Ann's sense of identification with Japanese culture and involvement with the community. But there are two ways that Einojo-*sensei*'s involvement has influenced new ethnicity in the *Sansei*. First, in a direct way, Einojo-

sensei has also fostered a closer social and affective link to Japan for the *Sansei*. Although a transnational dimension already existed in the group, the direct teacher-student relationship with Einojo-*sensei* has connected the *Sansei* in a pseudo-familial organization and Terese is even considering the possibility of formalizing this link with a stage name. The *Sansei* members have expressed how important this link is to them.

In a general sense, Einojo-*sensei* and the study of classical dance have been a catalyst for changes in the group that affect the *Sansei*. Because the group is more active and does bigger performances, the *Sansei* members have become more involved as organizers. Ann and Marj are using the dance skills they have learned from Mrs. Frueh and Einojo-*sensei*, to volunteer for the EJCA School Program. Because membership in the group has been steadily increasing since 1999 and there is greater activity, dance is fostering relationships between more Japanese Canadian women of different generations. After reconnecting with Ann after so many years Terese and Ann began studying Japanese together. It is in this way that the transnational helps to define local diasporic communities.

Interestingly, for the *Shin-issei* members, the involvement of Einojo-*sensei* has made dance less about spending fun social time with people from the same cultural background. The social aspect of dance as a focus and prime motivation to study dance is now of less importance than the desire to improve their dancing ability and progress with their studies.

Conclusion

Participation in Japanese dance helps the members of *Wakaba-kai* to live inside Canada with a difference. Not only does dance signify and maintain their ethnic identities in relation to the rest of Canada but it highlights the differences which intersect within the diasporic community. This shows that neither ethnic communities nor ethnic identities are homogenous. The way that dance, as a link to Japan and the local community, affects identity varies. It varies in style and intensity according to generation, individual experience and shifts throughout one's lifetime.

CHAPTER 4: *NIHON-BUYŌ* AND GENDER: AGENCY IN TEXT AND CONTEXT

> "Kanrye Fujima feels that the study of *nihon buyo* by students in the United States is a continuation of a trend started in Japan prior to World War II. According to her, girls from upper class families were encouraged to study *buyo* as part of their self development. As she puts it, "A girl was given dance lessons to teach her to be womanly, graceful and poised" (Sellers-Young, 1993; 67).

> "The feminine style in *nihon buyō* emphasizes constraint and humility: movements are directed downwards, backwards and especially inwards…In contrast, male roles in *nihon buyō* suggest preparedness for action, rather than withdrawal into an elegant pose to be appreciated by others…In *nihon buyō* the delimited physical space drawn by women's movements symbolizes restricted cultural space…Women's retreat into the private sphere here is not just a model *of* women's social role in exaggerated form: it also acts as a model *for* women, reinforcing social restraint and self-control…Dance may thus provide not only a model that performs (stands for, embodies, enacts) social organization and cultural values, but also a model that through performance instructs, induces and reproduces further enactment beyond its compartmentalized sphere" (Valentine, 1998; 272).

I first read Valentine's (1998) interpretation of the meaning of feminine style in *nihon-buyō* after I had been studying Japanese dance for about a year. His characterizations of the differences between feminine and masculine movement styles seemed quite accurate at the time. Although he never clearly states what kind of enactment feminine dance style encourages beyond the dance world, he implies that dance is a disciplining force in the training of women to be passive and humble as preparation for their role in the private domestic sphere. After getting to know the members of *Wakaba-kai*, this statement began to seem absurd.

Most strikingly I found that this was entirely incongruent with my observations of the members of *Wakaba-kai*. To describe them as passive or restricted to the domestic sphere was simply inaccurate. This group of eight women, in May 2002, mobilized an extensive network of Japanese and non-Japanese Canadians to produce a full length dance concert at the Myer Horowitz theatre that drew an audience of nearly three hundred people. Many members of the group have careers and many are extremely active in Japanese community associations. Secondly, that dance may induce restraint, humility, or passivity denies the logic of transmission and performance. To

learn a dance, one must intentionally and actively imitate the teacher and expend considerable effort to memorize and perfect the dance. The very act of performing for an audience requires an intentional decision to put the self on display and draw the attention of the audience.

Valentine's (1998) remarks on the relation of gender in dance to the politics of gender in Japanese society mirror many other studies. Traditional dance is usually examined in the context of localized cultural settings such as villages or nation states with an emphasis on how dances mirror social organization and provide models for the enactment of gendered identities and usually reinforce the unequal position of women (Hanna, 1988; 1993; Polhemus, 1993). Other traditional dances can be a site for the contestation of accepted gender roles. These dances, which often involve ritual transvesticism, may serve to diffuse tensions between men and women but do not permanently change asymmetrical gender roles (Grau, 1993; Hanna, 1988; 1993). Modern dance, in contrast, is often lauded for its ability to resist gender and racial stereotyping by representing men and women in ways which run counter to social expectations (Albright, 1995; Desmond, 1997). Several other studies have looked at the complex ways that dance may relate to gender without simply positioning women as passive receptacles of male-defined cultural values (Cowan, 1990; Novack, 1990).

I agree that there is a relationship between the representation of gender differences in dance to gender politics in society, but argue that one simply cannot say that traditional dance reifies normative (asymmetrical and unequal) gender relations while modern dance resists them. I argue that, in fact, it is not just a matter of asking if a dance reifies *or* resists stereotypes.

The relationship between the story told by the dance and how it relates to broader culture is more complex in a globalizing world. With increasing global flows of information and ideologies, social order is neither static nor monolithic and many suggest it never was as bounded or homogenous as anthropologists often assumed it to be (Clifford, 1997; Rice, 2003). Even the most isolated rural village is likely connected to other people and places through a variety of information technologies. This is significant because it may allow for the transmission of multiple discourses about and

images of women that interact with local discourses. In modern Japan, traditional dance is only one of many cultural products that present representations of idealized gender that may serve as models for women and men. In fact, *nihon-buyō* is an elite art engaged in only by a small number of people. In the diaspora, particularly those situated in a multicultural country like Canada, contact with other gender ideologies is even more immediate and concrete.

Secondly, I argue that there is a very significant difference between the narrated event (the story being told in the dance) and the event of narration (the performance of the story) (Bauman, 1986; 112). In *nihon-buyō*, in particular, the originary context of the narrated event is very far removed from a contemporary performance of the dance. The stories enacted in most classical Japanese dances are from the Edo period (1600-1868) when Japan was largely isolated from the rest of the world or based on events and characters from that time. It goes without saying that while Japan is certainly shaped by this history, the country has changed drastically since then. Interpretation of the narrated event without consideration of the specific contexts of its performance (rather than the generalized cultural context of patriarchy) leads to an incomplete picture of how dance relates to society.

Finally, to understand how gender representations in dance relate to the identities of women in society, the subjective views of dancers must be included. The study of dance shapes the dancers in *Wakaba-kai* but it does not inscribe a monolithic essentialized ideal Japanese concept of "womanliness" on a passive, homogenous group; rather, dance is actively learned, interpreted and used by women who are reflexive agents. In this chapter, I examine the discourses that have constructed Japanese Canadian women variously as passive, exotic, submissive and lacking in agency. Then I analyze the representations of women in the dance *Harusame*, according to the subjective perspectives of the members of *Wakaba-kai*, and consider some of the subtle ways in which dancers resist being defined by Orientalist discourses. This shows how traditional dance may both "reflect *and* resist cultural values simultaneously" (Novack, 1990: 181).

The Circulation of Ideologies and Images of Japanese Women

Does migration from Asia to North America provide Asian women with more freedom to resist traditional Japanese gender roles? In this section, I explore the way that the circulation of ideologies of gender and images of Japanese women between Japan and the West situate women's experiences in the discourses of nation-building, Orientalism and Western Feminism. These contexts provide a basis for the interpretation of the narrative events of dance performances and their relationship to women's experiences. Understanding of these discourses is key to showing how women use dance to both exemplify and resist the ways they have been constructed through discourse.

Many commonly held notions of Japanese women in Japan and in the West have been produced in part through the interaction of Japan with the West. Kano (2001) argues that the modern binary construction of gender difference has developed in Japan since 1868. When Japan opened to the rest of the world at the end of the Edo period (1600-1868) they saw the technological and military might of the West and the project to build modern Japan commenced. Kano (2001) says that for Japan to compete with and be recognized as "culturally legitimate" by the West, the "modern nation-state required modern subjects, gendered, educated and integrated into the family as a unit of social organization" (Kano, 2001; 15).

In the Meiji period (1868-1912), translations of European writings about biological differences between men and women contributed to the modern construction of Japanese women. Kano (2001) suggests that "biological sexual difference became aligned with other kinds of difference" to justify biological difference as a "natural basis for treating women as a category of bodies that are different from and inferior to male bodies" (Kano, 2001; 29). By the 1890's these "scientific" writings about biological differences between men and women were used to support the ideology of "equal status with a difference" and to legitimate the sexual division of labour (Ueno, 1990 (Cited in Kano, 2001; 29); Kano, 2001). Homosexuality, which among the Samurai classes had been considered simply another aspect of male sexuality, was then labeled as a perversion while heterosexuality became normative and served to reify

binary definitions of men and women (Kano, 2001; 30). Scientific discourse combined with political, legal and educational discourses to further define the role of women.

The central purpose of education for women was to shape them into good wives and wise mothers. Thus the "good wife, wise mother" ideology, or *ryōsai kenbo*, identified the role of women as "helpmates and reproducers of the loyal male subjects of the nation-state" (Kano, 2001; 30). Before 1890, there had been limited opportunities for upper class women to participate in the political life of their communities but in 1890, the good wife, wise mother ideology was used to justify banning women from participation in politics (Kano, 2001). Japan's investment in the production of female subjects who fit into Western models is indicated by the Japanese government's censorship of the book *The Japanese Bride* by Tamura Naōmi. It was not permitted to be published in the United States because of its portrayal of women who were unwilling to obey their husbands (Tamanoi, 1990).

Writings by European and American men about Japan are a source of many stereotypical images of Japanese women. Yamamoto (1999) argues that there was a tendency for male European and American writers about Japan to separate Japanese women from Japanese men and attribute to women only those abstracted qualities that appealed to the West. Some abstracted qualities of Japanese women that received approbation among Western men were obedience, subservience, and faithfulness to men. Chamberlain (1927, cited in Tamanoi, 1990) praised Japanese women for being gentle and faithful in comparison to Western women. Ironically while praising Japanese women for these characteristics, the inequality between men and women in Japan was used as proof of the "backwardness" of Japan and used to further justify the domination, occupation and westernization of Japan (Yamamoto, 1999).

One dominant image of Japanese women that is particularly problematic in the diaspora rather than in Japan is that of the sexualized Other. Yamamoto (1999) suggests that Asian American women are often conflated with a series of undifferentiated stereotypical characters "whose (assumed or enforced) foreignness and physical exoticism promise a range of delights: Lotus Blossom, China Doll, Madame Butterfly, *Geisha* Girl, Suzy Wong, Dragon Lady" (Yamamoto, 1999; 65). The conflation of

Japanese women with *geisha* and other such figures encodes Japanese Canadian women in "an economy of racial and gender difference" (Yamamoto, 1999; 65). This image of the Asian woman for consumption has been deployed in advertisements, film and popular media (Ting Yi Lui, 1995; Yamamoto, 1999).

For Japanese women, the *geisha* trope is particularly problematic. Popular books like *Memoirs of a Geisha* (1997) and *Madame Sadayakko: The Geisha who Bewitched the West* (2003) have further brought the image of the *geisha* into the public's imagination. To many Canadians, the sight of a woman wearing a *kimono* and dancing to or performing traditional Japanese music evokes the image of the *geisha*. Even though I am not Japanese, the act of wearing *kimono* and singing *kouta* in public has prompted comparisons to *geisha* from audiences. Some of the other ladies in the dance group have said that various people at performance events have asked them if they are *geisha*. This "*geisha* trope" is significant because it projects qualities linked with *geisha* such as beauty, exoticism, sensuality, and passivity, onto Japanese Canadian women and even non-Japanese women who participate in Japanese dance (Sellers-Young, 1993). The *geisha* and the Japanese dancer are then stereotyped as pretty and sensual but passive, obedient and lacking agency. The performance of classical dance may, in fact, serve to encourage the conflation of dancer with *geisha*. Classical feminine dances have even more exaggeratedly feminine movements than *shin-buyō* and require the dancer to wear the white make-up associated with *geisha*.

Another trope of some consequence for Japanese women is that of Madame Butterfly. Cio-cio-san waits faithfully for her American husband to return to her and despite his lack of loyalty, displayed in his polygamous marriage to a white American woman, hands over her son to him and his American wife for the good of the child before committing suicide (Heung, 1995). In this image, the Japanese woman is faithful and loyal regardless of how badly she is treated and sacrifices herself for the good of others.

It is important to note that even the liberatory discourse of feminism, which many Japanese and Japanese Canadian women believe in, can be implicated in continuing the stereotype of the Asian woman who needs to be saved (Yamamoto,

1999). The image of the Japanese woman as developing feminist can serve to situate Japanese women in a subordinate position to Western feminists. This is why Wolf (1996; 26) notes that the emphasis placed by some feminists on raising people's consciousness must be tempered by the question "who are we to change or raise the consciousness of others?" The idea of consciousness raising may imply that the researcher, whose consciousness is raised is in a position to tell those being researched the right way to live (Wolf, 1996; 26).

Ortner (1995) warns that researchers focus not only on macro politics but micro politics as well. In addition to this focus on the power imbalance between colonized and colonizer, studies of resistance must consider the internal power politics present among the colonized: between women and men, women and women, classes *et cetera* (Ortner, 1995; 177). This approach is important to avoid romanticizing resistance.

In actuality, there are a number of similarities between the roles of women in Canada and in Japan. In both countries social organization is characterized by patriarchy and in both countries, the options for women in terms of work and family have changed significantly. In the past fifty years, it has become more and more common for Japanese women to participate in the workforce. Compared to Western countries, the percentage of working women is quite similar (Brinton, 1988, Cited in Tamanoi 1990). Roberts (1986) points out that Japanese working women, like American women, in addition to work outside the home are still expected to take on most of the household and child-rearing responsibilities at home. In Japan, as in Canada, women tend to make less money than men and are less likely to be promoted to positions of power.

The way women participate in the workforce, though, is different than in many Western countries (Tamanoi, 1990). Japanese women are often "part-time workers" who actually work full-time but do not receive the benefits of full-time work (Kondo, 1990; Tamanoi, 1990). It is also common that women who are employed by a company do not receive training necessary for advancement in the company (Tamanoi, 1990). One young woman I knew in Japan described getting a job in a well-known company and was disappointed to find that while the male recruits received training about the

business, she and the other female recruits were taught only how to answer the phone and make tea.

Furthermore, although Japanese women have more options regarding work and family than ever before, they still tend to be valued for the nurturing of others, at home and in the workplace (Creighton, 1996; Kondo, 1990; Roberts, 1996).[25] Several Japanese women I spoke to in Japan disliked attending company social events because they were expected to act as hostesses and ensure that their male co-workers drinks were always full.[26] There is also still is an expectation that Japanese women sacrifice their own personal goals in order to care for others (Imamura, 1996). Rowland-Mori (1996) found that women who participated in traditional arts in Japan justified the time spent away from family with the idea that the skills they learned in such arts were not only for personal growth but important to know so as to be able to teach their children.

Although discrimination and lack of opportunity at work is criticized by many Japanese women, many sociological and anthropological studies of Japanese women have described the ways in which women find fulfillment as well as status and influence their family's fortune outside the workforce. Studies from the 1960's and 1970's indicated that the division of labour along gender lines provided middle class housewives with almost complete control of the private sphere and that they were very content with this arrangement (Tamanoi, 1990). Hamabata (1990) found that the wives of the presidents of large family businesses capitalized on well-developed kinship networks to further their own and their family's interests beyond the domestic sphere. Marra (1996) described how rural women could strongly influence their family's prosperity through hard domestic work and good management of finances to achieve high social status in the community. Thus, equality in the workforce is not the only measure of Japanese women's status in Japan. There is evidence to suggest that perhaps

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[25] See Kondo (1990) *Crafting Selves: Power, Gender, and Discourses of Identity in a Japanese Workplace* for detailed information about the ways in which women in the workplace often function to nurture male workers in the context of the "company as family."

[26] At social gatherings in Japan, one is never supposed to pour their own drink; rather, it is good manners to make sure that the people at your table always have their drinks full. This is not limited only to women, but there is an even greater expectation for women to take care of those at their table.

contrary to popular belief in the West, many Japanese women do not wish to become more like Western women (Marra, 1996).

Japanese and Japanese Canadian women have been shaped by international and global power relations. The images and ideologies that discursively position Japanese Canadian women variously as passive and homogenous are produced not just by Japan or by the "West." They are produced through the circulation of images and ideology between the two countries, shaped by global flows of information, and unequal power relations. The images of Japanese womanliness that circulate are shaped by political needs as well as shifting local and global power relations. Thus the broad cultural context within which dance and narratives about dance can be interpreted is not *a* bounded, closed context; rather, it is made up of competing discourses which are and always have been dependent on forces outside the nation state as well as within.

In both Japan and Canada, women still face discrimination in the workforce and are still often associated with the private sphere. I suggest that the difference between Canada and Japan is one of degree. In Canada there is less discrimination on the basis of gender in the workforce. In Japan, there are also many opportunities outside of the workplace to find status, influence and fulfillment. Perhaps the most significant difference between Japan and Canada is the fact that women in Japan have to contend with sexual stereotypes but Japanese Canadian women in Canada must deal with both sexism and racism which converge in the conflation of the Japanese Canadian woman with *geisha*.

Making Meaning of Representations of Women in *Nihon-buyō*

Japanese dances are narrative: they always tell a story. Many dance movements are pantomimic representations (*furi*) of everyday actions such as writing a letter, sleeping, or drinking sake, or more abstract representations of a character's inner feelings such as a movement where slowly twirling a fan indicates that a female character is thinking of the man she loves. These movements combined with the text, costumes and music tell the story.

The meaning of the song text is extremely important. It holds the key to understanding the dance so that the dancer is able to convey the meaning in a performance. Understanding of the meaning of a movement in relation to the words of the text is how the *Shin-issei* members of the group memorize the dances. Einojo-*sensei* always makes a point of explaining the meaning of the song to me in lessons. He has also stressed the importance of understanding the text in order to express the story. Song texts often describe scenes in nature and Einojo-*sensei* told Mineko that in the dance *Aki no Irokusa* (The Coloured Grasses of Autumn) she should show the scenery when she dances. If the narrative says she is supposed to be looking at a mountain range, she should imagine that she sees mountains.

There is very little change as dances from the Japanese classical dance canon (*koten*) are transmitted from generation to generation within the context of the *iemoto* system. There is minimal space within these dance roles for individual dancers to portray female characters differently than their teachers have taught them. An ideal student tries to imitate her teacher's style exactly until it is completely internalized. Mrs. Frueh has said that a dancer may bring a different feeling to the dance through her emotions but she does not actually change the movements. Because dance is taught in the context of the *iemoto* system where teachers and headmasters' opinions have the weight of authority and the emphasis is on continuing the tradition, the classical dances remain largely unchanged. There is more freedom for new choreography in *shin-buyō* and that is where the creativity of teacher-choreographers is focussed. Of course, over time classical dances do change slightly. Einojo-*sensei* said that there once were large differences between each school's rendition of a particular classical dance but those differences have become smaller and smaller so that a dance like *Musume Dōjōji* has become standardized. He suggests that this has happened for two reasons: 1) television and video make it possible for one version of a dance to be captured and seen by many people; 2) standardization makes it easier for dancers from different schools to work together and for musicians from different schools to accompany dancers.

I argue that although Japanese classical dances do not change significantly as they are transmitted, there is not only one meaning for each dance and meanings change

according to who is interpreting the dance. I take a phenomenological hermeneutic approach to understanding the meaning of dances. McNamara (1999) uses the term text to refer to "all symbolic constructs of meaning which, in the world of dance, may include dances, the social and cultural activities surrounding dance, books about dance, the language of dance, and so forth" (McNamara 1999; 163). The text I examine, in this section, is the whole effect of dance movements, song lyrics and music combined to tell a story in the dance *Harusame*. Following Hans-Georg Gadamer (McNamara, 1999; 163), I believe that "the meaning of a text actually emerges from the process of interpretation itself." Meaning is emergent and produced through interchanges "among one's own pre-understandings, the text, as well as the traditions and cultural context of the text" (McNamara, 1999; 163). Because meaning is dependent not only on the text, but on personal experiences and cultural contexts even the very traditional canonical classical dances do not have a fixed meaning.

Can the movement vocabulary of feminine dance style be read to represent Japanese women as shy, coy, dainty, fragile, elegant, passive, and humble as Valentine (1998; 272) suggests? A comparison of *Kurodabushi* (a masculine dance) and *Harusame* (a feminine dance) illustrates how male and female characters are indeed portrayed differently. *Kurodabushi* is a well-known folk song often performed at happy occasions like weddings. The song describes the activities of a *Samurai* of the *Kuroda* clan who is very skilled in fighting with a *yari* or spear. In contrast, *Harusame*, is from the semi-classical musical genre *hauta*. In *Harusame*, a woman looks out on a rainy spring day and wonders about the future of a romantic relationship. I chose these dances for two reasons: they are fairly typical yet short examples of male and female dances; and I have learned to dance as well as play and sing both of these songs.

The basic position of men and women's dances are quite different.[27] Women's roles are "spatially focussed inward" while men's dances could be described as having an outward focus (Sellers-Young, 1993; 41). For women, the legs are turned in from the hips so that the knees almost touch and the feet are in a pigeon toed position. In men's dances, the legs are turned out from the hip so that the knees and toes point outward in a

[27] Gender difference is most pronounced in classical dances. In many *shin-buyō* dances foot positions are more neutral.

way that is similar to the basic foot position of ballet.[28] Although there is a stylized way of moving with the knees bent and feet pointed forward that is common in masculine and feminine dances, in women's dances the knees must always be bent.

Women's roles are characterized by smaller movements and use less space than men's roles. While *nihon-buyō*, in general, requires the dancer to move with bent knees at all times and it is rare for arms or legs to be fully extended, movements in masculine dances tend to be larger and involve more extension than movements in feminine dances. For example, in women's dances the fingers are kept close, but in male dances the fingers are often spread out, as seen in Figure 1. Similarly, arm movements in feminine dances are generally smaller than in men's dances and elbows are kept close to the body. For instance, in Figure 2, one can see that the dancer of the female role is pointing in a way similar to the dancer in Figure 3 but in the feminine dance, the dancer uses far less space. The dancer in *Harusame* continues to keep her arms and legs bent but Mrs. Frueh's stance is wide and her right arm and left leg are more fully extended.

There are other general differences between masculine and feminine roles observable in a comparison of these two dances. While, movements where the hand is inside the sleeve are not uncommon in men's dances, in female dances, unless a property object is being held, the hand is usually tucked inside the sleeve. In the choreography of feminine roles, there are many movements in which the dancer covers his or her face a sleeve or a fan much like in Figure 4.[29]

The texts of *Kurodabushi* and *Harusame* can also be interpreted as supporting the representation of Japanese men as strong and active in opposition to women who are portrayed as more passive, particularly in relation to love relationships. In the second verse of *Kurodabushi* the text narrates the journey of the *Kurodabushi* to return to his love. He rides a horse and seeks her out while she bides her time playing the *koto* and waits for his return. In one interpretation of *Harusame*, a low-ranking *geisha* who is a

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[28] This is a general difference between masculine and feminine dances. In fact, there are two main types of men's roles: *aragoto* roles and *wagoto* roles. The style of *aragoto* roles is physically opposite *onnagata* roles while *wagoto* roles are less extremely differentiated from feminine dance style (Sellers-Young, 1993).

[29] Again, movements which cover the face also occur in masculine dances but are more common in women's dances.

Figure 1
***Kurodabushi*: Masculine Hand Position**

Mrs. Frueh is performing the dance Kurodabushi. Her left hand is closed around a fan but the fingers of her right hand are spread wide. This hand position is characteristic of masculine style dance but not feminine dance where the dancer leaves no space between his or her fingers. I took this photograph in Mrs. Frueh's dance studio in October 2002.

Figure 2
***Harusame*: Use of Space in Feminine Dance**

In this photograph, Nakano-san performs *Harusame*. While pointing toward a tree described in the lyrics, she maintains a bend in her right arm and in both legs. Full extension of the arms and legs is avoided in feminine dance roles. I took this photograph at the Edmonton Japanese Community Centre in April 2003.

Figure 3
***Kurodabushi*: Use of Space in Masculine Dance**

While making a gesture similar to the gesture in Figure 2, Mrs. Frueh fully extends her right arm and left leg. Although the gesture is similar, the extension of her arm and leg demonstrate how a dancer in a masculine role uses more physical space than a dancer in a feminine role. This photograph was taken in Mrs. Frueh's studio in October 2002.

Figure 4
***Harusame*: Covering the Face in Feminine dance**

In this gesture Nakano-san tucks her left hand into the sleeve of her *kimono* then hides her face behind her sleeve. This movement is very common in feminine dances but not in masculine dances. This photograph was taken at the Edmonton Japanese Community Centre in April 2003.

very skilled singer wonders if the man she loves will buy out her contract and marry her.

It is true that dance movements present a stylized, idealized woman who is the opposite of men. Male kabuki actors, called *onnagata*, who specialized in feminine roles, developed feminine dance style. To disguise their masculine physical appearance, they developed many techniques. In order to hide their large hands, they made a point of keeping them tucked inside the sleeve of the *kimono* sleeves and keeping the fingers close together when the hand did appear. To appear shorter and smaller than men, *onnagata* moved with bent knees, avoided extending their arms and legs and moved with their legs in an exaggerated inward turn (Sellers-Young, 1993).

These characteristics of female dance roles could be extrapolated to conform to the portrayal of Japanese women as gentle, meek and submissive as they have been represented in discourses about and within Japan. One could easily argue, as Valentine (1998) does, that the limited use of space in women's dances reflects the restricted role of women in social space. Certainly women's dances use less space than men's dances: the movements are smaller and are directed inward. This could be interpreted as symbolic of the role of women in the domestic sphere as the good wife, wise mother ideology suggests. Furthermore, the way hands are hidden in the kimono and the face is often screened by a fan or a sleeve could be interpreted as congruent with expectations that women be modest and humble. But the narrated event of the dance is not told through movement alone. Other aspects must be taken into account including the song text and music.

I have had several short discussions with Mrs. Frueh about how the narratives of dances portray women. While she agreed that many Japanese dances portray women as powerless, not all do. In *Musume Dojoji*, for instance, the woman transforms into a demon and destroys a temple bell. At the end of the piece instead of withdrawing "into an elegant pose to be admired by others," as Valentine (1998; 272) suggests is typical in Japanese dance, she poses triumphantly on the fallen bell. There are other dances that portray extremely high ranking courtesan characters who have the authority to choose

their customers. Moreover, even dances which may seem to portray women as passive may have alternate meanings. To understand how women are represented in dances I consider the meaning of the dance *Harusame* through the subjective understandings of several contemporary *Shin-issei* Japanese Canadian women.

Harusame: The Process of Interpretation

Harusame ni shippori nururu uguisu no,	An *uguisu* (a small green bird) gently wrapped in the silky mist of the spring rain,
Hakaze ni niō ume ga ka ya,	Ruffles its feathers, stirring up the scent of the plum blossoms,
Hana ni tawamure shiorashi ya.	How sweet to see it playing among the flowers.
Kotori de sae mo hitosuji ni,	Even a little bird faithfully
Negura sadamenu ki wa hitotsu,	Returns to sleep in one nest.
Watashya uguisu nushi wa ume.	I will be the *uguisu*, the master will be the *ume* (plum tree).
Yagate mimama kimama ni naru naraba,	Eventually, if things go the natural way
Sa- ōshyukubai ja nai kai na?	The *uguisu* will find shelter in the plum tree, won't it?
Sa- sa nan demo yoi wai na.	What happens will happen.

To arrive at the above translation of the song *Harusame* I went through a process of consulting a number of *Shin-issei* women. At a dance lesson, during a tea break I asked the members of the group what the song meant. I had pieced together as much as I could by myself but the poetry was quite dense. Most of the *Shin-issei* ladies there that day added something to my understanding but it was Mrs. Frueh who said that the woman in the song was looking at the spring scenery and wondering what the future held for her and the man she loved. She believed the mood of the song was kind of sad and contemplative at first but by the end became lighter and more cheerful. Mrs. Frueh

then translated the final line as "*que sera sera*" and indicated that it meant the *geisha* believed she would be fine on her own no matter what happens.

I summarized the meaning of the song according to Mrs. Frueh's interpretation at a performance I did with a dancer. Afterwards, I was quite surprised when a *Shin-issei* volunteer at the Edmonton Japanese Community Centre approached me and indicated that the explanation I had provided was incorrect. She said that the woman in the song was a low-ranking *geisha* who wanted to get married but was not sure if her lover would marry her and her final line, "*nan demo yoi wai na*" expressed her frustration and anger over her situation. In modern colloquial Japanese "*nan demo na*" is used in that sense.

Feeling quite perplexed, I enlisted the help of a *Shin-issei* Japanese translator who was not part of *Wakaba-kai*. I hoped that this would help make sense of these two very different interpretations of one song by two women who both spoke Japanese as a first language. The entire song is an extended metaphor of the relationship of the two lovers in which the bird represents the *geisha* and the *ume* (plum blossom tree) represents her lover. The *uguisu* and the *ume* (plum tree) are often paired in song and are a very romantic, sensual even erotic image.[30] The main character in the song is a *geisha* who probably sings very well. We can infer that the *geisha* has some skill in singing by virtue of the comparison with the *uguisu* which is also known for its beautiful song.[31] Mrs. Kawasaki translated "*nan demo yoi wai na*" as "what happens will happen" and inferred that this indicated the *geisha* was unsure about her lover's intentions but was resigned to not having control over the future.

Finally, I approached Mrs. Frueh with my new interpretation of the song in which the *geisha* was in a weak position, and feels helpless because she has no control over the future. It was then that Mrs. Frueh explained that she thought the *geisha* was not low-ranking, desperate or helpless because of the music at the end of the song. The purely instrumental parts in the music often express a character's inner thoughts and feelings. The tempo of the instrumental part that follows this final line remains the same

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[30] This pairing is so common in song and poetry that the *uguisu* is sometimes referred to as *nioidori* meaning bird of fragrance or fragrant bird.

[31] In fact, a *geisha* who is a good singer is sometimes called an "*uguisu geisha*."

but uses smaller note values so that rhythmically, it feels faster. Mrs. Frueh described this instrumental part as upbeat and lively and for that reason thinks the *geisha* has fairly high status and is confident in her ability to take care of herself regardless of what her lover decides. To Mrs. Frueh "whatever happens will happen" is meant in a carefree, rather lighthearted manner.

The line *nan demo yoi wai na* followed by the increased rhythmic pace of the instrumental part at the end led two women to come to very different conclusions as to the status and emotional state of the *geisha* in the story. One woman interpreted the *geisha*'s feeling at the end of the song as one of anger and frustration while the same text and music lead Mrs. Frueh to see the *geisha* as feeling carefree and cheerful.

Further analysis of the text and music supports that the song can be interpreted as either happy or sad; the *geisha* either as self-sufficient or helpless. One could argue that the *shamisen* tuning of this piece supports Mrs. Frueh's interpretation since it is in *ni-agari* (a perfect 5^{th} and a perfect 4^{th}). In the Japanese theory of ethos, most musicians agree that *ni-agari* is associated with a gay and lively mood. Yet, as Malm (1973) notes in practice *ni-agari* does not necessarily denote a happy mood. Furthermore, the entire song is in *ni-agari* so there is no change in tonality to suggest that the mood of the song has changed at the end. Secondly, in the text, the words *shiorashi ya* express the *geisha*'s view of the *uguisu*. The word *shiorashi* comes from the verb *shioreru* meaning to wilt. It can be translated variously as gentle, modest, sweet, tender or meek, pathetic and helpless. Because the song is an extended metaphor and the *geisha* is the *uguisu*, this expression actually tells us something of how the *geisha* sees herself. It is open to interpretation whether the *geisha* sees herself as gentle and sweet or pathetic and helpless.

What does this have to do with identity? If the pre-conceived notions, experiences as well as historical and socio-cultural situations of the interpreter influence the interpretation of a dance then we can infer something about the interpreter, as well as their socio-cultural situation from their interpretation of a narrated event (McNamara, 1999; 166). I argue that both of the attributed meanings are valid, because they are based on the text in relation to the biographically situated self. Mrs. Frueh's personal

experiences and pre-conceived notions influence the way that she interprets the position of the *geisha* in the song. She has a greater body of experiences against which to compare this dance than the other lady who is not a dancer. Mrs. Frueh is very familiar with the dance and music so perhaps she is capable of making a more informed interpretation of the dance.

I suggest that in part her interpretation may be influenced by the fact that she has invested a great deal of herself into the study and transmission of Japanese dance and has a vested interest in interpreting dances so that the meaning is congruent with her sense of self. If identity is created by the "stories we tell on ourselves" and we incorporate those events which are congruent with how we see ourselves and reject those that are not (Glassie, 2003), I suggest that we may also reject those interpretations of events which do not reflect our view of the self and include those that are congruent.

For the *Sansei* members of the group, the meaning of dances may be even more open because they do not speak Japanese well-enough to understand the nuances of the text. When I asked Terese how she was able to express the emotion of a dance when she was not able to totally understand its meaning, she said that she relies on the music.

> For the emotions, I try and imagine something in my mind whether I'm right or wrong, I have no idea because I don't know what I am dancing to. I just feel whatever comes out of me listening to the music. So if it sounds sad, I'll be sad. If it sounds happy, I'll be happier.

Her understanding is very much dependent on the music, rather than the text.

As I have illustrated, the meaning of a classical dance can vary tremendously according to who is interpreting its meaning. Audiences may very well interpret the way dancers use their skills to present an ideal feminine character as confirmation of existing stereotypes of Japanese women. Although a detailed study of audience interpretation is beyond the scope of this research, it is significant to note that gender reversal in dance is a convention of Japanese dance: men and women learn both male and female dances. Perhaps the sight of a woman performing a masculine dance role in which she has a wide stance, makes large movements and portrays an heroic character may serve to disrupt gender stereotypes and draw attention to the performative nature of gender. My

focus, however, in the next section is on some of the strategies Japanese Canadian women use to deal with representations of women in dance that may not be congruent with their self image.

Ambivalence

My research suggests that the *Shin-issei* members of *Wakaba-kai* are resistant to the unequal and asymmetrical gender relations in Japan. One *Shin-issei* woman said that she feels that she has become quite "Canadian" in the sense that she speaks more directly, thinks less about the relative status of others and rarely hesitates to speak her opinion even if someone may be *me-ue* (of higher status). She also indicated that she is less likely to defer to men than she may have once been.

A *Shin-issei* member of the group described men's dance as consisting of "more free, normal, natural movements." One *Sansei* member described men's dances as exciting and fun and women's dances as not exciting and timid. Yet the same woman really loves Japanese dance and has said that she admires Mrs. Frueh's skill at female dances.

Another woman expressed ambivalence about the relation of dance to gender politics. When asked what a student could learn from Japanese dance, she said that because women's dance movements are feminine, studying dance can teach women to be more feminine. She went on to suggest that when she was growing up in Japan there was an expectation that young women should move in a graceful, feminine way but that now in Japan, girls have more freedom to move differently and that there is a significant difference in the young generation. For instance, she said that in Japan today young women are fairly likely to sit casually with their knees apart but she would never have done that when she was younger. She linked the idea of feminine grace with an expectation that young women also be obedient:

> Until my generation, we really feel that parents and most of society really want girls to move gracefully, or I don't want to say obedient, but it was true at that time. I don't like it now but I'm raised like this...but now I'm changed in here {points to heart}. I should have my own way to live. I should have my own opinion but when I was young...

This statement suggests that she sees a link between the movement style of female dance roles and broader societal expectations of young women. It also indicates that her idea of how a Japanese woman should be has changed as she has gotten older. When I asked her if moving to Canada was part of this change, she believed it was because it is when she goes back to Japan that she recognizes how much she has changed. Once when she had returned to Japan to visit, she heard someone describe a young woman as a "good girl" because she was quiet and obedient. She disagreed with the idea that a good girl is a quiet, obedient girl.

Although critical, this same woman loves to study Japanese dance and is fascinated with and focussed on imitating the extremely subtle and feminine movements of Einojo-*sensei* when he is portraying a female character. She described repeatedly watching a videotape of Einojo-*sensei* performing *Harusame* in hopes of learning to imitate the subtle very feminine head movements he does and lamented the fact that she could not do it like him. This suggests ambivalence between her desire to internalize a very feminine movement style and some of the associated meanings of the same feminine style.

Managing the *Geisha* Trope: Omission as Strategy

The *geisha* trope is a very real issue for the members of *Wakaba-kai*. Some members of the group have very negative feelings about *geisha* and view them as a shameful part of the history (and modernity) of Japan. Others have said that they recognize the skill and artistry of *geisha* or feel sorry for *geisha* who in most cases had no choice but to become *geisha*.[32] When I asked the group if people at performance events ever ask them if they are *geisha* they indicated that it did happen on occasion and that they did not really appreciate the comparison. Kyoko said that she just dismissed these comments as arising from ignorance about Japan rather than ill-will since performing Japanese dance does not make one a *geisha*.[33] While it is true that *geisha*

[32] Until recently most women who became *geisha* were sold by their families to *geisha* houses.
[33] Mrs. Frueh has suggested that in Japan in the past, studying dance was associated with being a *geisha* as well. In modern Japan, dance is more likely to be associated with wealth and social status since it is very expensive to learn in Japan.

study and perform Japanese dance for patrons and that they are significant in the *nihon-buyō* world, most people who study *nihon-buyō* are not *geisha* but amateurs who simply enjoy dance.

I suggest that the members of *Wakaba-kai* omit information about *geisha* or courtesans to minimize comparisons to *geisha*. They cannot control what the audience thinks but, particularly in Canada, they have greater control over how the dance may mean to the audience. The audiences for dance concerts in Japan are usually comprised of dancers or dancers' families rather than the general public. In Canada, audiences consist of Japanese Canadians and other Canadians, very few of whom have studied classical dance and who most likely know comparatively little about *nihon-buyō*. Many Japanese Canadians do not understand Japanese perfectly, and the texts of classical Japanese music use older forms of Japanese and colloquial expressions from the Edo period which are often unfamiliar to contemporary Japanese people. Because of this, the dance synopses provided by the members of *Wakaba-kai* may often serve as the only source of information as to the meaning of a dance.

In the time that I have been a member of *Wakaba-kai*, in a concert setting, there has never been any mention of the fact that a character in a dance is a *geisha* or other type of courtesan.[34] In many classical dances female characters are *geisha* or courtesans and *nagauta* and *kouta* or *hauta* texts, in particular, often focus on real or fictional events that occurred in the pleasure quarters during the Edo period (1600-1868). The lyrics of many classical dance texts include subtle erotic double meanings.

For instance, although everyone I have spoken to agrees that the woman in Harusame is a *geisha* and that the song is about her concern for the future of her relationship with her lover (as demonstrated in the translation provided above), the synopsis provided at performances suggests something different. Rather than explaining the metaphor of the *uguisu* and the plum tree, the synopsis literally translates the description of the scenery while omitting any mention of the *geisha* or even without

[34] In Edo period Japan, there were many different classes of prostitutes. Some were high-ranking prostitutes who may have had some special training in the arts or were particularly attractive and so commanded higher prices. *Geisha*, however, were not explicitly involved in sex work.

indicating that the song is about a romantic relationship. The explanation originally suggested by Mrs. Frueh is as follows:

> Harusame is a traditional classical dance that describes the spring scenery. Raindrops fall softly and the fragrance of plum blossoms fills the air. The flower petals are falling. A little bird is taking shelter in a plum tree. The description of the scene also suggests a moment of loneliness and wonder.

I do not suggest the members of *Wakaba-kai* are deliberately attempting to deceive the audience but that the omission of certain information about a dance is a strategic way to manage their own representation. They know that people sometimes think of *geisha* when they see Japanese dance. They also often perform at educational and school events so mentioning *geisha* or even hinting at the subtle double meanings of the poetry would be inappropriate. There is evidence to support that this omission of suggestive information is consistent with a trend in Japan to make dance suitable for proper young women (Ashihara, 1965) but the difference in Canada is the degree to which the audience relies on the synopsis provided to understand the meaning of the dance.

Conclusion

Representations of gender in Japanese dance can be said to both support and resist the discourses that have constructed Japanese Canadian women as an homogenous, passive group. Not all characters in female Japanese dance roles are portrayed as lacking power. Even those dance roles which appear to present an idealized woman whose fate is entirely dependent on the decisions of men, such as *Harusame*, may be open to alternative interpretations which subvert the "Madame Butterfly" trope.

Japanese Canadian women are discursively located at the interstices of patriarchal authority, orientalist fantasy and ideologies of gender equality. These competing (and sometimes complementary) subject positions are negotiated by a reflexive agent who is always able "to provide discursive interpretation of the nature of, and the reasons for, the behaviour in which they engage" (Giddens, 1991; 35). Of course, the language used to do so is not likely to be the same as the academic language

I am currently using, but the dancers are able to reflect on, and think critically about, the representations of gender in dance. Thus, while they may play the roles of characters such as *geisha* or courtesans who may move in extremely feminine ways and may or may not be rather passive, they are simultaneously aware and critical of many of the political implications. Although the ultimate goal of dance transmission is for the dancer to completely embody the tradition as passed on by the teacher, each dancer has her own personality, viewpoint and values shaped by the cultural contexts in which she experiences dance. Participation in Japanese dance does not simply inscribe the body with an essentialized Japanese "womanliness."

While omitting references to *geisha* or courtesans in the synopses of dances is a somewhat overt way to try to control their representation, other forms of resistance are subtler. I argue that having ambivalent feelings about the representation of women in dance or the potential role of dance in training young women to be obedient is a form of subtle resistance. The dance itself may not change but the dancer's and the audience's experience of it becomes different. It is in these ways that the members of *Wakaba-kai* are able to enjoy the artistic and physical challenges of Japanese dance and the benefits of studying a form of expressive culture that represents their heritage, while simultaneously subverting the discourses that would deny them agency.

Japanese dance is a way for the members of *Wakaba-kai* to express agency and construct their identities. Unfortunately, performing Japanese classical dance has some unintended consequences: it invites comparison to *geisha* and inscribes an identity that is incongruent with their personal experiences. Their attempts to manage the *geisha* trope indicate agency, yet are not entirely successful. Despite omitting references to *geisha* or courtesans and avoiding any hint of the sexual suggestiveness of some song texts, the *geisha* trope seems to be ever present. Although they are agents who use dance to construct their identities, in Canada, agency is limited by the convergence of sexual and racial stereotypes manifest in comparisons to *geisha*.

CHAPTER 5: TRADITION AND AGENCY IN A TRANSNATIONAL ARTS ORGANIZATION

The relationship with Einojo-*sensei* has made it possible for the members of *Wakaba-kai* to learn the Japanese classical dance repertoire. It has also transformed *Wakaba-kai* into a node in a transnational arts organization: the Senju school of dance. The Senju school, like other *nihon-buyō* schools in Japan, is organized according to the *iemoto* model of transmission and through Einojo-*sensei Wakaba-kai* has become incorporated into this system. *Wakaba-kai* has changed a great deal since becoming a node in the *iemoto* system, as I briefly described in Chapter two. Interestingly, my observations of the group also suggest that the system, as it exists in Japan, has not been perfectly reproduced in *Wakaba-kai*; rather, it has been adapted to suit the needs of the members.

Most descriptions of the *iemoto* system tend to stress its fixed power structure and rigidity. Hsu (1975) writes a great deal about the "absolute authority" of the headmaster and emphasizes the power of the *Iemoto* to revoke membership.[35] In Japan, I observed several situations in which students broke with the norms of tradition and had to face the social consequences that resulted. The combination of my own experiences studying traditional music in Japan and the tone of most literature I have read, has led me to understand the *iemoto* system as a very strict organization where breaking tradition is poorly looked upon. Why then is it possible for the members of *Wakaba-kai* to adapt the system so as to reflect their bi-cultural identities without being denied membership? I argue that it is *Wakaba-kai*'s location in the diaspora which expands the possibility of adapting the *iemoto* system and its ideologies to construct Japanese-Canadian identities within the context of dance.

I will first show how studying an art within the context of the *iemoto* system in the socio-cultural milieu of Japan is a process that shapes the identities of members. Against this normative picture of dance in Japan, I compare how dance is studied in the

[35] Despite this, there are many instances of resistance to the authority of headmasters in the history of Japanese arts organizations. There are disputes over the inheritance of the headmaster title and teachers, such as Einojo-sensei's teacher, do often leave and start their own group.

diaspora, specifically in *Wakaba-kai*. Many of the social controls and ideological notions that seem natural in Japan conflict with the beliefs, values and economic needs of Japanese-Canadian dance students. Then I document some of the ways that *Wakaba-kai* members both reproduce and resist the affective, and often coercive, forces which shape identity in Japanese arts organizations. This shows that *Wakabakai* members both resist and reproduce – craft, and are crafted by – the *iemoto* system. Finally, I explore some of the reasons why they are able to maintain their position in the *iemoto*'s hierarchical structure even though they sometimes push the limits of acceptability.

How Identity is Shaped by the *Iemoto* System: Self and Organization in Japan

The *iemoto* system has emerged from the specific socio-cultural milieu of Japan: in fact, it once was *the* system of social organization. Because of this, many structural and ideological aspects of the *iemoto* system are common to Japanese culture in general. What I am concerned with in this section is how membership in an organization, specifically a Japanese arts organization, influences identity. To explain this, I must first clarify some issues regarding the relationship of self to social group in Japan.

In Japan and Canada, there are differing social norms and different ways of viewing the relationship of self to society. Much of the contemporary literature about Japan suggests that one's role in social groupings forms the locus of identity to a much greater extent than in "western" countries. It is commonly believed, both in and outside of Japan, that Japan is more collectivistic than the "West" and particularly more so than the United States (Yohtaro and Osaka, 1999). The general idea is that Japanese people focus on consensus and harmony and subordinate the desires of the individual to the good of the group whereas Western people place greater emphasis on the needs and rights of the individual. This concept is usually referred to as "groupism" or "collectivism."

This notion was first promoted by Western observers of Japan who described Japanese people as lacking individuality (Takano and Osaka, 1999) and having a collectivistic national character (Benedict, 1946). Throughout the 1970's and 80's scholarship on Japan continued to develop along these lines. Kiefer (1971) says that

groups are hierarchical and members' identities are indistinguishable from their role in the group. He writes that historically in Japan: "a basic assumption of all group interaction was that each individual had no legitimate interests which conflicted with those of the group, that group and individual interests were same, and that person and role were considered the same for practical purposes" (Nakane, 1974;123). Nakane (1970) even suggested that this tendency toward groupism is a natural propensity of Japanese people to the extent that it is "in the blood of the Japanese" (Nakane, 1970;76).[36]

I do not believe that Japanese people have a natural propensity to form stable hierarchical social groups, or that westerners have a natural (and superior) tendency to value individuals. It has been suggested that the whole notion of individuality is a western construct and characterization of non-western people as the opposite is one of the ways non-Europeans have been constructed as "other" (Hall, 1992; Keister, 2001). Secondly, it is problematic because misconceptions about Japanese "collectivism" in the west have led to the stereotyping of Japanese people. It portrays them as "a uniform race of pliant, obedient robots, meekly conforming to rigid social rules and endlessly repeating the established patterns of their society" (Reischauer, 1988; 15).

This focus on groups tends to lump all Japanese people into an homogenous mass and deny the agency of group members (Dissanayake 1996; Hamabata 1990; Kondo 1990). Researchers who have studied small and large family enterprises have shown that there is conflict between individuals and the groups to which they belong and that resistance to one's position in the hierarchy is very common (Hamabata, 1990; Kondo, 1990). Research by Kondo (1990) and Hamabata (1990) show the tension that exists for members of such households between their personal desires and their sense of responsibility and obligation to the continuity of the family business. Kondo (1990) illustrates that Japanese people, in fact, are not passively shaped by their roles in the family/family enterprise but actively "craft" the self within the context of social

[36] These types of ideas are often considered to belong to the discourse of "*nihonjtron*." The *nihonjinron* discourse is a body of thought largely based on the assumption that Japanese culture is unique in the world and essentializes Japanese culture.

relations. They are agents who simultaneously resist and reproduce the power structures by which they are also shaped.

There is a greater concern with explicitly organizing groups of people in stable hierarchies in Japan but this concern does not eclipse agency and it is not "natural." Many scholars say that the current emphasis on orderly groups and stable social hierarchies in Japan is the product of many years of government control (Hahn, 1996; Keister, 2001). Prior to the Tokugawa period (1600-1868) in Japan there was a great deal of unrest and civil war. After Tokugawa Ieyasu united the country by force and became the Shōgun he implemented a system of social organization imported from China that was heavily based on Confucian teachings. It organized every individual in the nation according to rank and required elaborate codes of conduct based on one's status that were heavily enforced. This system of organization predominated for nearly three hundred years, and it is from this system that the *iemoto* system originates.

I acknowledge, as Dissanayake (1996) suggests, that the "group" is an analytical category that has been emphasized too much in the study of Japanese culture. One cannot conflate role in a group with identity. I prefer to view collectivism, like Clammer (1995), as an ideal rather than a reality:

> The project of Japanese society is genuinely utopian: an attempt to create harmony. The theme of harmony, however much empirically contradicted in practice, remains an ideal, another indigenous metatheory of Japanese life, something to be realized as people subordinate selfish goals to collective aims, and as they perceive their dependency on others... (Clammer, 1995; 102-103).

Contrastingly, in Canada, there is more emphasis on equality amongst people. Canadians tend to minimize the importance of class and economic status, yet this is an ideal that is not perfectly achieved. Similarly, I view "individualism" and its association with other concepts like freedom as normative and ideal cultural values in the "West."

It is with this particular view of collectivism in mind that I now focus on the significance of hierarchical relationships in Japanese culture, and how they shape identity. In Japan, people must always be aware of their relative status in comparison with others. Status is determined by a number of factors including age, seniority and

gender, wealth or occupation. Essentially members of any group such as a company, sports team, dance group, or even a sewing club have a specific status based on these factors. Differences in social status are not unique to Japan but in comparison to Canada these differences in status are more explicitly expressed. One must know one's relative status in relation to others in order to speak, or physically position oneself in any social situation.

Differences in status are formalized by the ubiquitous concept of the *senpai-kōhai* relationship. *Senpai* and *kōhai* mean senior and junior, respectively. The length of time that one is part of a group is considered indicative of one's skill level. It also tends to be linked with age. For example, people who have worked in a company for a long time tend to be older and considered more skilled at their job. The *senpai-kōhai* relationship adds complexity to the already hierarchical *iemoto* system. The *Iemoto* is at the top, followed by licensed teachers, then *natori* and finally non-*natori* students. Each level of the *iemoto* is also divisible into *kōhai* and *senpai* postions.

It is important to note that one is not either *senpai* or *kōhai*. The distinction is relational. For instance, among non-*natori* students, the first student to join (student A) is everybody's *senpai*, but the second member to join the group will be student A's *kōhai* while simultaneously being student C's *senpai*. Student A is *kōhai* to those who hold *natori* and this continues through the hierarchy until the *Iemoto*. In general, *senpai* are in a position to give advice or criticize younger members and *kōhai* are expected to defer to their *senpai*. *Kōhai* show their respect by giving up a chair to their *senpai*, or allowing the *senpai* to enter a room first and newer members of groups often take on tasks such as setting up chairs or clearing up the dishes from tea time.

It is impossible to speak proper Japanese without being aware of one's relative status in any social situation because almost every utterance in Japanese is marked for politeness and formality (Jorden, 1978). Of course register is a significant factor in English and other languages, but in Japanese it is nearly impossible to say anything without register (Bachnik, 1998). In English there are a variety of ways to make polite requests and certain greetings like "hello" or "good morning" are more formal than "hi" but in Japanese even verb forms must be modified accordingly. Choice of verb form in

Japanese is a complex issue that I cannot fully explain here. For example different forms of the verb "to see" [*miru*] must be used in different situations.[37] When referring to my own actions while speaking to a person of equal or lower status I could use *miru* but if speaking to someone of higher status about my own actions I would need to use a more humble form of the verb such as *haiken suru*. If I were speaking about the actions of a superior I would use yet a different form of the verb, and there are various other forms that are somewhere between the very highest and lowest levels of respect and humility.

One's status is also expressed through one's position in space relative to others. The position in which one sits around a table indicates the relative status of those present. The seat farthest away from the door of a room is reserved for the person with the highest status. Those with higher status sit nearer to the highest status person and those with less status sit closer to the door. Similar seating arrangements exist for sitting in a car. Usurping the seat of someone with higher status than oneself is a social mistake of serious consequence.

I am not suggesting that hierarchical structures in the cultural context of Japan foreclose the possibility of agency. I must stress that although there is social pressure in Japan to act appropriately according to one's status, role is not imposed on passive people. Kondo (1990) has shown that Japanese people enact their identity and creatively use the norms of society to further their own ends. Identity is always created in the context of power relationships whether one is in Canada or Japan but hierarchical arrangements in Japan provide a culturally specific framework for agents to manipulate as well as parameters that limit choice.

This said, the organization of social groups into hierarchical structures is common in Japan in all social contexts including family, school, clubs and work. To function in daily life (speak Japanese, sit down at a table with colleagues) in Japan one must always be aware of one's relative status. Understanding one's various roles in social groups is necessary to become a fully functioning, socially acceptable member of society. By repeatedly enacting one's roles in society these differences in status are

[37] Verb form choice is also strongly influenced by whether or not the person to whom one is referring is considered part of one's own group.

naturalized and become part of one's identity. In Canada, however, this cultural norm is not present to the same extent. Because this exists in Japanese culture in general, the *iemoto* system has a much higher ability to shape the social identities of its members and maintain continuity with tradition.

The Self and the *Iemoto* System

The study of a traditional art, such as *nihon-buyō*, in the hierarchical social context of the *iemoto* system shapes the identities of students in specific ways. Keister (2001) indicates that studying a traditional art through the *iemoto* system is "both a highly individual pursuit in which one develops the self through developing the art, and a social process in which the student becomes integrated into a network of social relationships within a group" (Keister, 2001; 45). Through this process, one begins to identify with the group and with one's role in it.

Social relationships are always constructed in the context of unequal power relations (Talbot, Atkinson and Atkinson, 2003), but in dance organizations these power relationships are formalized in explicit terms. At the top of the hierarchy is the *Iemoto*, followed by licensed teachers, those who hold stage names and those who do not. To be part of an *iemoto* requires a member to take on a role within the hierarchy and act in a way that is appropriate to her status. This means that members must accept the authority of the headmaster, their teacher, as well as their superiors within the group.

A student cannot perform at any event outside of the school, without the permission of their teacher. An additional requirement is the payment of honoraria and the giving of gifts to various people within the hierarchy. Members must also complete various tasks for their teacher – everything from serving tea at lessons to cleaning their teacher's house. It is also important for students to be polite and show deference and respect to their elders/superiors at all times. What is it about the *iemoto* system which socializes members into this hierarchy? How does this shape their identity within the power structure?

The Ideological Basis of the *Iemoto* System

Continuity and orthodoxy are two ideological concepts used to support the hierarchical structure of the *iemoto* system and the hegemonic control of the *Iemoto* (Yamazaki, 2001). The *iemoto* is a pseudo-familial hierarchical "corporate entity" consisting of teachers and students organized so as to ensure the continuous transmission of the "family" property (the school style) (Kondo, 1990; 122). The implication is that "a perfect form of the art was achieved in the past and that disciples' artistic responsibilities are to transmit, maintain, and perpetuate the form without change" (Yamazaki, 2001; 218).[38]

Maintenance of the integrity of the school style is closely associated with the maintenance of the social hierarchy. The hereditary authority of the *Iemoto* makes him or her responsible for overseeing all activities in the school. The *Iemoto* is involved in the licensing of teachers and disciples, determines the authoritative version of dances, and determine the direction in which the artistic style will develop (Yamazaki, 2001). Although the *Iemoto* is highly respected for his or her artistic skill and is the definitive authority on style, Keister says that in *practice* the teacher is the central model of ideal form (Keister, 2001; 109). Because of this there is no competition from any abstract ideal so the student must learn the style through direct imitation of their teacher. By working closely with their teachers and improving as dancers students become *natori* and may eventually become teachers who have authority over their own students (Keister, 2001; 111).

It is through students' direct and ideally lifelong relationship with their teachers that students become socialized into the hierarchy. As a beginner, simply agreeing to take lessons entails making a commitment to one teacher and beginning to develop a relationship of mutual obligation with that teacher as well as other members of the *iemoto*. As a dancer progresses and takes the *natori* examination, her status becomes formalized and the teacher becomes their parent in the arts, while their teacher's teacher becomes their grandparent in the arts organization (Keister, 2001; Yamazaki, 2001).[39]

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[38] Hahn (1996) notes though that there are small changes from generation to generation.

[39] There is even a term for the relationship of a student to their teacher's teacher: the student is the *mago-deshi* of their teacher's teacher.

With this pseudo-familial relationship comes a mutual sense of life-long obligation between teacher and student based on the concept of filial piety.

The licensing of students by means of the *natori* helps to maintain the continuity of the school style as well as the hegemonic control of the *Iemoto*. The examination, theoretically, ensures the continuity of the school style, since the *Iemoto* has an opportunity to evaluate each student and decide if she has achieved a certain standard of performance consistent with the school's approach to dance. The large sums of money required to receive a stage name help to guarantee the loyalty of disciples. One cannot perform or teach professionally without a stage name. After spending $5000 to $10 000 to get a name, it is not likely that a student will arbitrarily decide to seek a different school with which to study (Yamazaki, 1995).

In a practical sense, the awarding of *natori* ensures the economic viability of the school and the economic power of the *Iemoto*. Although some *Iemoto* do perform and all certainly do teach, they depend greatly on the honoraria they receive from *natori* examinations. Honoraria for *natori* examinations are paid to the teacher who passes on a portion of the honoraria to their own teacher as well as the *Iemoto*. After becoming *natori* obligation is expressed partly through the ongoing giving of gifts, the payment of honoraria to one's teacher (a portion of which is passed on to the *iemoto*), and the purchase of certain items produced by the school.

The hierarchical organization of the *iemoto* system makes the transmission of the school style (intellectual property) highly controllable. In particular, the tradition of name-taking ensures that only an acceptable quality or style is transmitted to students. A student must pass an examination in order to get a stage name and may have to take an additional examination to become a teacher. The *Iemoto* is often involved in the examination process and therefore has control over who can teach. Students must commit to one teacher within one school and licensing ensures that they stay with the same school. As one progresses within the hierarchy financial and social obligations increase. Non-natori students pay fees to take lessons and perform in recitals. This supports their teachers as well as the *Iemoto* to whom a portion of the money goes. It is

in this way that each person in the *iemoto* contributes to the economic viability of the school and the continuity of the school style.

Hsu (1975; 62) describes the *iemoto* system as "a fixed and unalterable hierarchical arrangement" in which the *Iemoto* has "supreme" authority. The *Iemoto* is responsible for licensing *natori* and teachers, settling disputes among teachers and has the power to revoke a member's stage name if they are not obedient or do something to harm the reputation of the school (Hsu, 1975). Because stage names signify official discipleship, and indicate to which school and teacher one belongs, the power to both award and take away a stage name literally gives the *Iemoto* the power to award or take away one's identity in the dance world.

Obligation, Loyalty and the *Iemoto-sei*

To maintain the privilege of belonging to an *iemoto* it is expected that students act in a way that is appropriate to their status within the group. This means that every member of the organization must be obedient, defer to superiors, and be responsible for their peers and their *kōhai*. Associated with one's status in the group are various ways of showing humility and deference to one's superiors. In addition to financial obligations, there are many social obligations associated with various roles in an arts organization.

Members of a school are expected not to do anything which might reflect badly on their teacher or harm the reputation of the school to which they belong. This sense of obligation is learned and enforced in various ways. It very rarely happens but an *Iemoto* has the power to take away the stage name of anyone who behaves in a way that is disloyal or reflects badly on the school name. Also, students must ask their teacher for permission to perform at any event outside the control of the school. If the venue is deemed unsuitable the student may be denied permission. Most commonly though such pressure is far subtler and often comes from one's peers rather than directly from one's teacher.

Keister (2001) describes something he calls a "peer watchdog" effect. He says that with a sense of belonging to a school comes the responsibility of "keeping an eye

on every matter and every person within the domain" (Keister, 2001; 109). For instance, one musician I knew in Japan regularly performed with musicians who were not affiliated with an *iemoto*. He was never criticized by his teacher for doing so but other students had scolded him and warned him to stop otherwise his *sensei* might kick him out of the group. Such peer surveillance is usually not so dramatic; it is in the everyday performance of routine tasks at lessons that it is most commonly applied. While studying with the same teacher Keister (2001) notes that if there was anything during a lesson that he should be doing, there was always a more experienced student watching who would tell him what needed to be done.

It is difficult to explain how one begins to feel this sense of obligation to one's teacher. The *iemoto* system is a hierarchical structure where unequal power relationships among different members are formalized by licenses and expressed through the payment of honoraria and prescribed ways of showing deference and humility appropriate of one's status. The fees tend to be very high and *nihon-buyō* has even been described as the most expensive art form in the world (Havens, 1982). An outsider may very well wonder why a student would take on the expense of studying traditional Japanese arts and the obligation to the teacher, in what may appear as oppressive conditions.

Although inextricably shaped by power politics, teacher-student relationships tend to have a very affective and warm quality. Students feel a sense of obligation and loyalty to their teacher based on the tenets of filial piety. In return the teacher has a responsibility to provide artistic training and to advertise and protect the student in the professional world (Hsu, 1975). If you love dance and respect your teacher you try your best to imitate *sensei* in and outside of dance (Sellers Young, 1993).

As I have described above, many factors combine to influence self-identity in the context of a Japanese arts organization. First, there is a student's desire to develop the self artistically. The personal desire to grow as a dancer or musician cannot be separated from socialization into the group. This desire, combined with direct (and indirect) pressure from one's teacher and peer's, when presented as part of a well-defined ideology of continuity and tradition causes the student to internalize this

ideology. Although some of these forces can be described as "coercive" (Keister, 2001), once internalized students tend to identify with their role in the organization and have a very personal and emotional stake in perpetuating the tradition.

Because many aspects of the *iemoto* system which shape identity reflect general Japanese cultural norms, the process of socialization into an arts organization would likely seem natural to a Japanese person. By contrast, in Canada many of the factors that allow the system to shape its members are either entirely absent, situationally present or challenged by alternative ways of thinking. Because members are bi-cultural and have become accustomed to many Canadian norms, certain aspects of the *iemoto* system are not acceptable. The competing social models of egalitarianism and individualism make it more difficult for the hierarchy of the *iemoto* system to be reproduced in Canada. The location of *Wakaba-kai* outside of Japan creates conditions that allow greater freedom to interpret and use the ideology and rhetoric of the system without being defined by the social controls built into the *iemoto*.

Case Study: The Deployment of the Ideology of Continuity and Tradition in Wakaba-kai

According to Yamazaki (1995) tradition is a very important concept within the world of Japanese arts and one which is often called upon to legitimize the practices of the organization and support the hegemonic control of the *Iemoto*. Yamazaki (1995) says that in *nihon-buyō* "the concept of tradition is frequently used to indicate the norm for acceptability" (Yamazaki, 1995; 1). It can be used to support anything from the choice of fan for a dance to a way of walking. Mrs. Frueh uses these concepts to both reproduce and subvert the hierarchy of the *iemoto* system. These ideological concepts are used creatively to reflect the bicultural diasporic identities of *Wakaba-kai* members and the specific needs of the group. This ensures the continuity of our dance group.

Many of Mrs. Frueh's views and opinions of the *iemoto* system are consistent with the ideology of continuity/orthodoxy/authority of headmaster and the way the concept of tradition is used in support of this. In a conversation with her I asked about the *iemoto* system and her view of it. I had met a number of musicians in Japan who had

rather critical views but Mrs. Frueh did not feel the same way. It is significant that in her comparison of *chigiri-e*[40] and *nihonbuyō* she describes *chigiri-e*'s organization outside of the *iemoto-sei* as "modern" but links the *iemoto* system with the continuity of "tradition." This supports the common usage of modern as the opposite of traditional. The modern way does not ensure continuity.

She believes strongly that the practice of licensing disciples by means of the stage name is a very positive aspect of the *iemoto* system. Although it can be very expensive to get a master title (*natori*), she believes the *iemoto* system ensures the quality of teachers. When comparing *chigiri-e*, which is not organized according to the *iemoto* system, to *nihon-buyō* she thinks that having the *iemoto* system is better. She said:

> I also teach these things here [she points to artwork on the wall in her studio] called *chigiri-e*, you know, but we don't have any master title or anything like this. Anybody can join. Almost anyone can teach so even not very good, they go out and teach (Edmonton, 2001).

For her the licensing function of the *iemoto* system is important to ensure the continuation of a correct/authentic style of dance. She says, "maybe it's good to have given out the title that they can master the technique and stuff" and that because of this the *iemoto* system is good for "keeping up tradition" (Edmonton, 2001).

Mrs. Frueh acknowledges that in Canada, the conventions of the *iemoto* system and norms of acceptable behavior in Japan do not necessarily need to apply in Canada. When I asked her if people really have to follow the rules of the *iemoto-sei* when they are in Canada, she replied: "No, you don't have to follow but because it's a tradition, I'd like my girls to get the title [*natori*]" (Edmonton, 2001). Even though our position in Canada means that there is less pressure to progress to the *natori* status, she believes that it is a good idea. In this sense she uses the concept of tradition to naturalize and support the practice of getting a stage name which according to her is difficult to explain to Canadians. As Yamazaki (1995) suggests, the concept of tradition is used to legitimize the practices of teachers and *Iemoto*.

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[40] See glossary of terms.

Mrs. Frueh is very supportive of the concept of the *iemoto* system and has said that she would be pleased if her students keep up tradition by taking the examination to get their *natori*. Yet, there are several aspects of the way *Wakaba-kai* does dance that are not consistent with the *iemoto* system, particularly in relation to the obligation of paying fees, consistently adhering to Einojo-*sensei*'s version of dances and generally submitting to the "supreme authority of the *iemoto*" (Hsu, 1975, 67).

One consequence of studying dance within the *iemoto* system is that studying dance in *Wakaba-kai* has become a little more expensive. To study for one year with Mrs. Frueh, each member pays five dollars per month for a total of sixty dollars per year. When Einojo-*sensei* comes we have group lessons and private lessons. Mrs. Frueh usually pays for the group lessons out of lesson money or any donations or honoraria that the group may receive. To have private dance and *shamisen* lessons with Einojo-*sensei* for one week (between four to six lessons, thirty minutes for dance and thirty minutes for *shamisen*) I usually pay between $100.00 and $120.00. The total cost of lessons compared to what one would spend in Japan is quite low. And a *Wakaba-kai* recital is not nearly as expensive as a recital in Japan where a twenty minute performance may cost an advanced student upwards of 10 000 dollars.

The increasing costs incurred in the study of dance have been the source of some conflict within the group. One woman who had been in the group for a long time actually quit shortly after the 1999 recital because she did not like Einojo-*sensei*'s strict correction of her dancing and did not want to have to pay more for dance lessons. In Japan it is usually beyond the reach of average middle class people to advance in dance (unless they are born into a dance family) because the financial obligations increase as one progresses. This is a very real concern for the *Shin-issei* members of *Wakaba-kai* who are more aware than *Sansei* members of how expensive such obligations can become. They are not willing or able to pay 10 000 dollars to get a stage name or to perform a dance on the stage. This puts Mrs. Frueh in the position of having to negotiate between financial obligations to the *iemoto* and the financial concerns of members.

According to Yamazaki (2001) becoming a *natori* implies a lifelong obligation for the *natori* "to give monetary gifts on various occasions to her parent-teacher, who in

turn has the obligation to pass along a portion of the gift to her own parent-teacher" (Yamazaki, 2001; 220). A portion of the gift is then passed on in this way until it reaches the *Iemoto* who is "at the apex of this *ie* hierarchy" (Yamazaki, 2001; 220). She also says that a prevalent rhetoric used in justifying the large amounts of money spent by *natori* "for the privilege of being included in the lineage" is that of tradition (Yamazaki, 2001; 222). It is often said that disciples do not pay their teachers or headmasters, but that they pay the "tradition" (Yamazaki, 1995; 15).

Although currently only Mrs. Frueh has a stage name with Senju school, and because they are now part of a larger organization there is an expectation that *Wakaba-kai* contribute to the financial well-being of the school in a variety of ways. It is common for a school to produce various products such as a kimono or a small towel (called a *tenugui*) with the family crest of the school on it which students are obligated to purchase. These are an important source of income for the *Iemoto* (Yamazaki, 2001;1995). There have been several instances where *Wakaba-kai* members have been presented with opportunities to purchase such goods.

Einojo-*sensei* had beautiful colour pamphlets made that featured photographs of him and several students in full dance costume and information about the school which he sent to Mrs. Frueh with instructions to sell them to us, or perhaps to audiences. Several years ago Einojo-*sensei* produced a school *tenugui* (small towel with the school family crest on it which is a common dance property) and asked Mrs. Frueh to ask us if we wanted to order one for a cost of 5000 yen (approximately 60 Canadian dollars). When he organized a recital for his students in Japan, he sent Mrs. Frueh about ten tickets. The expectation was that we purchase the tickets and either give them to friends or acquaintances in Japan or simply pay the money as a donation to the school. This is very typical. Students in Japan are obligated to purchase a set number of recital tickets in advance and sell them or give them as gifts. If they cannot sell the tickets, they must absorb the cost. In addition, they are expected to purchase an *O-bento* (set meal in a laquer box) for their guests. Mrs. Freuh also attends to the purchase of gifts to send to Einojo-*sensei* during the summer and winter gift-giving seasons.[41]

[41] See Hamabata (1990) pages 18-24 for detailed information about Japanese gift giving rules.

Although Mrs. Frueh is very positive about the *iemoto* system and even uses the concept of tradition to encourage students to follow the Japanese way in many instances, requests to fulfill these monetary obligations have been met with ambivalence. During tea breaks we often discussed financial matters related to the group. With the pamphlets Mrs. Frueh dismissed the idea of selling them to us, or anyone else. In the case of the *tenugui* she partially fulfilled the obligation. She purchased one *tenugui* for herself and told him that the group may buy more later. She showed us the school *tenugui* that she had bought and asked us if anyone wanted to buy one. When we found out the price we were surprised by the high cost (5000 yen, approximately $60.00 CD) and no one purchased one.[42] As for the recital tickets, Mrs. Frueh decided to pay for them out of the group's account and asked us if we knew anyone in Japan who might be able to use the tickets. However, rather than paying the total actual price of the tickets, she decided on a slightly lower amount that she deemed a fair donation. She did not ask any of us to pay for the cost of the tickets even if we knew someone in Japan to whom we could give the tickets. With winter and summer obligatory gifts it seems that Mrs. Frueh complies with the traditional standards.

In April 2004, three of the *Shin-issei* members of *Wakaba-kai* received a *natori*. Mrs. Frueh had said that she wanted them to get a master title because "it's tradition" and she went through the difficult problem of negotiating a special price for them. She supports tradition of getting *natori*, but must compromise the obligatory fee. Mrs. Frueh has explicitly said that she believes the *iemoto* system is good for licensing teachers and keeping up tradition. Yet by negotiating some of the financial obligations required of her as Einojo-*sensei*'s disciple and as representative of *Wakaba-kai* she simultaneously resists "paying the tradition" (Yamazaki, 1995; 3). How can this paradox be resolved? I suggest that Mrs. Frueh knows the only way to make it possible for students to follow the tradition (get a stage name) is to negotiate the price so that it is affordable and acceptable to the members of the group. Also, she is probably aware that if the financial burden became too high students in the group would not be able to continue. Although

[42] Everyone figured that the price was probably high because the school was rather small and there would be no volume discount.

she resists some of the obligations defined by her role as disciple, she does so in service of the ideology of tradition and for the sake of the continuity of the group.

Why is Mrs. Frueh able to negotiate these financial obligations? In the literature I have read on dance or music *iemoto* it is usually suggested that obligations are to be taken very seriously. According to typical descriptions of the *iemoto* system, the non-fulfillment of an obligation to buy products produced by the school such as a *tenugui* or *kimono* would be unthinkable. In practice, however, in Japan, I knew of at least one person who because of her financial situation did not purchase all of the products produced by a school and negotiated lower prices for lessons. She was, however, an anomaly and received some criticism from other students because of this. *Wakaba-kai*'s relative isolation from Japanese dance society means that there are no peers of the same or higher status of Mrs. Frueh to put pressure on Mrs. Frueh to comply with these obligations.

Choreography

Two important responsibilities of the *Iemoto* are to determine "the authoritative interpretations of pieces" and to decide the artistic direction of the group (Hahn, 1996; 55). One of the ways they may influence the artistic direction of the group is by choreographing *shin-buyō* style dances (classical dances are canonical and tend not to change). Einojo-*sensei* is our *Iemoto*. Mrs. Frueh has a Senju *natori* (Senju Sayuki) and is Einojo-*sensei*'s student. By the position of authority implied by his identity not just as teacher but as *Iemoto* I expected that we would faithfully reproduce any dance he taught us exactly as we learned it from him.

Mrs. Frueh never changes the classical dances that we learn from Einojo-*sensei* but there seems to be a difference with modern dances. On several occasions Mrs. Frueh has significantly modified a modern dance that Einojo-*sensei* has taught us. He taught us a modern version of the dance *Sakura, Sakura* that we were to perform at the 2002 recital. Immediately after he returned to Japan, Mrs. Frueh decided to change two sections of the choreography. In the beginning of the dance, as Einojo-*sensei* had choreographed it, two dancers would enter and were alone on stage for a short period

before the other students entered. Mrs. Frueh decided that she wanted more volume on stage at the beginning of the concert (*Sakura Sakura* was first on the program) and changed the choreography so that four students would enter at the beginning. In a subsequent section of the same dance, we had to walk around in a circle four times while holding cherry blossom branches up in our right hands. Mrs. Frueh changed it so that on the third circle, we held the cherry blossoms in our right hands but pointed them down then moved the blossoms up for the fourth time. Before the recital, Einojo-*sensei* returned and helped us to polish this different version of *Sakura, Sakura*.

When Mrs. Frueh changed Einojo-*sensei*'s choreography, I was totally shocked and felt extremely uncomfortable. Her changes seemed strange given that she believes in the *iemoto* system and the way it maintains tradition. How can her high regard for tradition be reconciled with her situational disregard for the traditional authority of the *Iemoto* as arbiter of style? At least part of the explanation for these seemingly contradictory actions is that to her *shin-buyō* is changeable because it is not "traditional." It has not been passed down generation to generation and does not need to be followed so closely.

Negotiating Roles: The relationship between Einojo-*sensei* and the non-natori members of *Wakaba-kai*

The final, and perhaps most interesting example of how *Wakaba-kai* both reproduces and resists the production of hierarchical relationships is in the interaction of the members with Einojo-*sensei*. In lessons with Mrs. Frueh, although her role as *Sensei* is unquestioned and she is highly respected, the atmosphere is more casual than when Einojo-*sensei* is teaching. When he is present the *Shin-issei* members of the group, in particular, interact with him and with each other in a more formal way and use many specifically Japanese ways of showing humility and respect. In this section I will describe how the behaviour of group members changes when Einojo-*sensei* is present and contrast this with one very telling incident which occurred at a party following our recital.

Hsu (1975) states that the *Iemoto* has "absolute authority" over his or her disciples. Tomie Hahn also writes that the *Iemoto* is "revered as the definitive expert of the tradition" (Hahn, 1996; 55). This reverence for the *Iemoto* is expressed in a variety of ways when Einojo-*sensei* is present. There is a marked difference in the way people act in lessons with Einojo-*sensei* compared to lessons with Mrs. Frueh.

From my experience studying Japanese music in Japan and knowledge of the literature on *iemoto* I have come to understand that many aspects of lessons express deference for one's superiors. By observing the type of language used, the physical proximity of students to the teacher and other ways of expressing deference, one can fairly accurately determine the hierarchical relationships among members of a group. These elaborate ways of showing respect and humility are not restricted to arts organizations but are a basic part of Japanese culture that are common in the workplace and religious contexts as well as in other leisure activities.

In the introduction, I described the way *Wakaba-kai* began including formal bowing at the beginning and end of each lesson when Einojo-*sensei* became our teacher. This has continued into the present and now we bow formally before and after each lesson regardless of who is teaching. One notable difference is that we tend to use a more formal version of "thank you" when bowing at the end of a lesson with Einojo-*sensei*.

Beyond the use of formal set phrases like *yoroshiku onegaishimasu*,[43] the student is expected to speak politely to the teacher at all times. There are other a number of ways to say thank you: different expressions which convey thanks (from more polite to less polite) include: *domo arigato gozaimasu*, *arigato gozaimasu*, *arigato*, *domo*, and *sumimasen*. Even *yoroshiku onegaishimasu* has a more humble form (*yoroshiku onegaiitashimasu*). In lessons with Mrs. Frueh we say thank you with the polite phrase *arigato gozaimasu* but in lessons with Einojo-*sensei* many of the members of the group use the more polite *domo arigato gozaimasu*. The more formal tone with Einojo-*sensei* indicates that there is a greater social distance between him and the students than with Mrs. Frueh and the students.

[43] This polite expression is difficult to translate into English but has been translated to me as "please be kind to me."

One of the ways to illustrate the change in behavior that occurs when Einojo-*sensei* is present is to compare a lesson with Mrs. Frueh to a lesson with Einojo-*sensei*. In general, lessons with Mrs. Frueh are a little more casual in tone and the relationship between teacher and student is more egalitarian (there is less social distance). It is common for students to interrupt and ask a question or make a suggestion during a lesson with Mrs. Frueh but this is far less common with Einojo-*sensei*. Also Mrs. Frueh tends to use a more collaborative approach to teaching than Einojo-*sensei*.

Many people who have written about doing fieldwork in Japan or with Japanese groups outside Japan have stressed the importance of non-verbal learning and the inappropriateness of asking too many direct questions of one's teacher (Hahn, 1996; Keister, 2001; Malm, 1998). In my experience in Japan, there was usually a point in a lesson when our teacher would give us the opportunity to ask questions. But it was unthinkable to interrupt her and ask a question or make a suggestion in the middle of a lesson unless told to do so and considered rude for another student to attempt to answer the question instead of the teacher.

Occasionally in a group lesson a student will interrupt Mrs. Frueh and ask a question. In general students ask many questions which often direct the focus of the lesson to a specific problem that needs attention. Interestingly, when a new student asks a question other experienced students will assist Mrs. Frueh in correcting the problem. In this way the lesson is quite collaborative: students not only alert the teacher's attention to a particular problem but also often participate in its solution. In our dance lessons, more experienced students often openly give advice (solicited and unsolicited) to newer students during lessons.

In a group lesson with Einojo-*sensei*, by contrast, students rarely interrupt or give suggestions. All of the students tend to be a little quieter and do not openly give advice to each other during lesson time. Instead, it is more likely that another student might remind me of something that I missed privately during a break or when we are waiting outside the dance studio while others are rehearsing. Once, when Einojo-*sensei* was teaching a group lesson, a *Shin-issei* student started giving advice to a newer

student but realized that it was inappropriate and stopped herself. As she walked away, I heard her say to herself, "I should be quiet."

Another example of the more collaborative approach of Mrs. Frueh is observable at solo and small group dance lessons. Even at individual lessons with Mrs. Frueh or Einojo-*sensei* other students are usually present. Mrs. Frueh uses a variety of instructional strategies but there is one that stands out. Often when a student has learned much of a dance and is working to solidify her memory and perfect smaller details, Mrs. Frueh will dance beside the student having the lesson (student A) while others watch, point out discrepancies and offer suggestions. For example, the observers might tell student A that she is not holding her fan like *Sensei* or comment on details that are out of Mrs. Frueh's sight such as a foot turned in the wrong direction. During this time, Mrs. Frueh will instruct and correct the student as well but the observing students contribute quite significantly.

In individual lessons with Einojo-*sensei* this strategy is not present. In general, Einojo-*sensei* seems to correct students a little more strictly and directly than Mrs. Frueh. He constantly singles out any student who makes a mistake and uses a variety of strategies: he will often stop and imitate a student in an exaggerated manner to show why a movement is incorrect; point his fan in the direction that the student should be looking; or use a vocal cue such as "hup" to indicate the timing of the next movement. The fact that other students will ask questions, suggest doing a section again, and even interrupt Mrs. Frueh but avoid similar behaviour with Einojo-*sensei* indicates that they are aware of a larger status gap between Einojo-*sensei* and themselves in comparison to Mrs. Frueh, and modify their actions in dance accordingly.

This analysis of a typical lesson with Mrs. Frueh and a typical lesson with Einojo-*sensei* highlights a few of the ways students act differently when studying dance with Einojo-*sensei*. When we bow in thanks at the end of the lesson, we use the slightly more formal expression with Einojo-*sensei* than with Mrs. Frueh. We ask fewer direct questions and do not interrupt Einojo-*sensei* during lessons.

***Sempai/Kōhai* relationships in action**

A comparison of a lesson with Mrs. Frueh and a lesson with Einojo-*sensei* suggests that members of the group, especially the *Shin-issei* members, recognize the social distance between themselves and Einojo-*sensei*. They change their behaviour in the dance space so as to reflect their status as students in relation to his authority. Similarly when he is present the *Shin-issei* also take their status as *sempai* more seriously and take responsibility for making sure that the newer/younger members such as Marj, Terese and myself also act appropriately.

Certainly, students are expected to arrive on time for lessons with Mrs. Frueh but in Japan being punctual is particularly important; it is considered extremely rude to be late. During Einojo-*sensei*'s November 2002 visit one *Sansei* student and I arrived about ten minutes before a group lesson at 7:30. I usually need about fifteen minutes to change into a *yukata* so I was running late. It also happened that I had a difficult time tying my *obi* (belt) on that particular day and the *Sansei* student was helping me. At 7:40 I was not yet ready. A concerned and upset *Shin-issei* student came upstairs and admonished us to hurry up saying that we cannot be late because Einojo-*sensei* is Japanese and he is not used to people being late.

For the most part, hierarchical seating arrangements are not strictly adhered to in Japanese dance lessons, with one exception: when Einojo-*sensei* is here, he is always given the high status seat when we have tea, eat at a restaurant or have dinner at someone's home. Although he has the highest status seat, we do not tend to arrange ourselves around him according to status. In one instance, Marj, a relatively new *Sansei* student, expressed reluctance to sit close to Einojo-*sensei* at a good-bye party during his January 2003 visit because she knew about hierarchical seating and did not want to be rude to the other, more senior students. In this instance, though, the same *Shin-issei* woman made a point of reassuring Marj that our group did not worry about such things and that she should sit wherever she likes.

These two anecdotes tell us a great deal about the relationship of *Shin-issei* and *Sansei* students. In the first example, the *Shin-issei* lady encouraged Terese and I to modify our actions in a way that would be more suitable to Japanese culture and our

teacher's expectations. In the second case, instead of encouraging Marj to conform to Japanese custom, she gave her permission to ignore it. It appears that this *Shin-issei* member not only has the authority to teach a *Sansei* student to follow Japanese norms but she also has the authority to determine when and in which situation these norms are significant.

These two incidents show that being rude to Einojo-*sensei* either by being late or not giving him the seat of honour is not acceptable. Acknowledging the status of Einojo-*sensei* appears to be important but acknowledging the status differences amongst members of the group by making sure we all sit in the seat appropriate to our status appears not to be nearly as important. It also shows that members of *Wakaba-kai* conform to their role according to status in relation to Einojo-*sensei* but not necessarily to each other. I suggest that this reluctance to emphasize status differences amongst the group shows the influence of egalitarian views of friendship in Canada.

This is Canada: You Have to Say Please

From the examples above it is clear that the members of *Wakaba-kai*, have a great deal of respect for Einojo-*sensei* and adjust their actions to indicate their humility in relation to him. Yet there was one incident when they made it very clear that his position as *Iemoto* had its limits. Kondo (1990) writes that even the nicest, most considerate Japanese man will hold out his rice bowl to the nearest woman as a way of asking for seconds. This does not mean that he is rude; amongst members of one's in-group (company, family, group of friends) it is considered normal in Japan.

At a party we had when Einojo-*sensei* was here, he asked for another beer by simply pointing in the direction of the beer and saying *biru* (beer). I, as a foreigner who had lived in Japan and one of the newest (therefore lowest status) students, automatically reacted by getting the beer and bringing it over to him. The *Shin-issei* members of the group, however, reacted in a shocked manner and told him that this is Canada and he must say please if he wants something. He looked quite surprised but added "please," then said thank you.

In Japan a man with a high status position such as *Iemoto* has a great deal of authority and is almost expected to speak brusquely to those of lower status. In Japan an *Iemoto* has the right to demand obedience from his disciples and students and to scold them if necessary but it is unthinkable for students or disciples to scold their teacher. In Canada, the members of *Wakaba-kai* usually go out of their way to show deference and humility toward Einojo-*sensei* but this incident shows that his authority has limits. Why do they reproduce the humble behaviour considered natural to their role as students in some situations but resist it in others?

I suggest that this reflects their location in the diaspora. In a dance lesson, the *Shin-issei* generally show the kind of deference to Einojo-*sensei* that their identities as students dictate. It is appropriate to the situation and indicates how much they value him and the knowledge that he is able to pass on to them. But when his authority as a man and as an *Iemoto* conflict too strongly with the ideologies of gender equality that they value in Canada, they are not afraid to assert themselves. This shows how members of *Wakaba-kai* use alternative ideologies to express agency. Secondly, in the diaspora, the general social context that would legitimize Einojo-*sensei*'s assertion of his power is absent. In this situation the members of the group are able to enforce an alternative norm. It is in this way that the members are able to use the dances taught by Einojo-*sensei* to construct their identities while simultaneously resisting the unequal power relations of the *iemoto* system.

Conclusion

The three above examples show how the members of *Wakaba-kai* selectively reproduce and resist the norms of behaviour that their relational identities (as *kōhai*, *senpai*, student and disciple) would normally require in Japan. The members of *Wakaba-kai* display agency by selectively reproducing and resisting aspects of their roles within the hierarchy. They creatively use the same ideologies and concepts to meet their own needs and reflect their Japanese Canadian, bi-cultural identities.

Mrs. Frueh resists some of the financial obligations implied by her relationship to Einojo-*sensei* but does so only in the name of the continuity of the group and to

follow the tradition of getting *natori*. Similarly, the role of the *Iemoto* as arbiter of style is challenged by Mrs. Frueh's modification of his choreography but only with dances in the *shin-buyō* style. She shows her respect for Einojo-*sensei* as holder of the tradition by faithfully reproducing those dances that she deems traditional and resists his authority by taking liberties with non-traditional *shin-buyō* dances. Similarly, the members of *Wakaba-kai* change their behaviour when Einojo-*sensei* is present. In one sense they act in a way that may be considered more "Japanese." They take their roles as *senpai* or *kōhai* more seriously and make sure that *Sansei* and *gaijin* (foreign) members of the group act appropriately, and show greater deference to their teacher by not asking as many questions. Yet, when his authority as a male *Iemoto* threatens the ideology of gender equality that is part of their bi-cultural identity, they unequivocably assert their agency.

The *iemoto* system is often portrayed as inflexible and dominated by the threat of social pressure or even excommunication if one behaves inappropriately (Bachnik, 1983; Hsu, 1975; Keister, 2001). Yet, the members of *Wakaba-kai* are able to challenge this authority without incurring negative consequences. Why are they able to do this? My findings suggest a number of possible reasons, mostly having to do with the location of *Wakaba-kai* in a diasporic community.

It is beyond the scope of this research and thus a question for further study in Japan but it may be that the power relations between headmasters/teachers and their students have changed. Traditional arts such as *nihon-buyō* are in a rather precarious marginalized position in Japan and there are many different schools, so perhaps competition for students has shifted power away from teachers to the hands of students/consumers. Perhaps teachers are reluctant to do anything which may cause a student to quit.

Most likely I think it is *Wakaba-kai*'s location in Canada that is significant. In Canada, the norms of the closed world of Japanese dance simply cannot be enforced. The social controls such as *Iemoto*/teacher and peer surveillance do not constantly influence *Wakaba-kai*. If Mrs. Frueh wants to do something that might not be normative in Japan like refuse to buy some school product or change the choreography, there are

no other Japanese dance teachers or disciples of Einojo-*sensei* to pressure her to do otherwise.

The members of *Wakaba-kai* are not likely to put pressure on Mrs. Frueh since other than Ann (who did not speak Japanese at the time), none of them have studied dance in Japan and thus do not know what the norms are. Even the most experienced student who studied *shamisen* and *kimono kitsuke*[44] in Japan has said that when it comes to Einojo-*sensei* she does not always know what to do about the payment of fees.

Most important is the bi-cultural nature of the *Shin-issei* and *Sansei* members of the group. The *Sansei*, for certain, but even the *Shin-issei* members of *Wakaba-kai* are comfortable with the norms of Canadian society. As I discussed in previous chapters, the *Shin-issei* are bicultural and have at times expressed a preference for things they associate more with Canada. These include the idea that it is fine to directly speak their mind to someone of higher status and that men and women have an equal right to express themselves. These alternative ideologies and values provide the material with which to resist the unequal power relations characteristic of the *iemoto* system. Perhaps it is also partly because *Wakaba-kai* is located in Canada; the members are bi-cultural; and many do not speak Japanese, that Einojo-*sensei* may not have the same expectations of the group.

[44] See glossary of terms.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

In the diaspora Japanese dance represents Japanese traditional culture and participation in dance locates the members at the interstices of different cultures: Japanese culture and Canadian culture.[45] Both cultures are frameworks of manifold and sometimes contradictory ideologies, discourses, and values which shape the identities of *Wakaba-kai* members. In the diaspora these frameworks converge and the available discourses that shape identity become even more numerous. With *Wakaba-kai*'s relationship to Einojo-*sensei* (and the *iemoto* system), the traditional ideologies, discourses and values common to the *iemoto* system and Japanese culture have become increasingly accessible and influential. It is within this shifting cultural milieu that the members of *Wakaba-kai* negotiate their identities.

To explore the way the increasingly transnational nature of *Wakaba-kai* influences identity in this shifting context necessitates a great deal of comparison. There are four levels of comparison closely interwoven throughout each chapter. I have compared the way dance is practiced in *Wakaba-kai* now, to the way it was practiced before Einojo-*sensei* became the headmaster and how the group approaches dance when Einojo-*sensei* is present in Canada, to when he is not. The third level of comparison is the difference between the practice of Japanese dance in the diaspora and my understanding of the norms *nihon-buyō* culture in Japan. Finally, I have compared the differences between how the *Shin-issei* and *Sansei* members of *Wakaba-kai* use dance to construct their identities. What insights into diasporic identities can be gleaned from these comparisons?

Einojo-sensei's involvement with *Wakaba-kai* has transformed the group. Since he began teaching classical dance to *Wakaba-kai*, the group has staged two major recitals and has grown from six to twelve students. Learning the more difficult solo and ensemble dances of the classical repertoire has caused the members of the group to become more serious about dance and invest more time practicing together and individually. The group's link to Einojo-*sensei* has also situated them within the *iemoto*

[45] Neither Japanese nor Canadian culture is static or homogenous. Culture is constantly in the process of being constructed by multiple groups and its meaning is open to interpretation.

system. One consequence of this link is that *Wakaba-kai* is now in a more intense relationship with Einojo-*sensei*, the Senju school and each other. Einojo-*sensei*'s relationship with *Wakaba-kai* shows how a transnational connection to even one person has the power to transform the local.

In addition to the long-term changes caused by *Wakaba-kai*'s relationship with Einojo-*sensei*, the group is temporarily transformed each time Einojo-*sensei* visits Edmonton. These visits provide an opportunity to observe the complex and shifting nature of diasporic identities. When Einojo-*sensei* is teaching the group the dancers approach dance in a way that can be described as more Japanese. They conform to their role as student or disciple in the context of the *iemoto* system by following many of the norms of deference and humility common in traditional Japanese culture. Yet in an instance when Einojo-*sensei*'s actions conflicted too much with their belief in gender equality, their role as students in relation to the *Iemoto* did not stop them expressing their view. *Wakaba-kai* members associate gender equality more with "the Canadian way" and hierarchical relationships with "the Japanese way." The way they negotiate Japanese and Canadian social norms shows the syncretic nature of their identities.

Similarly, comparing and contrasting *Wakaba-kai*'s approach to dance to the way the *iemoto* system works in Japan shows how dance tradition is transformed by the process of transmission. Although classical dances are transmitted largely without change, the way the group interprets and enacts their roles in the *iemoto* system is somewhat different. The *iemoto* system is often portrayed as a strict hierarchical organization. Yet Mrs. Frueh has on occasion made small changes to the choreography of *shin-buyō* dances and selectively resists other aspects of tradition while maintaining the group's connection to Einojo-sensei. This suggests that the *iemoto* system is more flexible than it is usually portrayed and shows that *Wakaba-kai* members are agents who negotiate the way traditional Japanese dance culture is adapted. In this way, *Wakaba-kai* is uniquely Japanese-Canadian and is able to bridge the geographic and cultural distance between Japan and Canada.

For the *Shin-issei* and *Sansei* members of *Wakaba-kai*, Japanese dance relates differently to ethic identity. For the third generation, participation in dance is one of the

most significant links to ethnic identity. They have few Japanese friends outside of *Wakaba-kai* and dance is one of the only a few situations in which they encounter Japanese culture. By contrast, the *Shin-issei* members do not need dance to connect them to their ethnic identities because they speak Japanese, and have maintained strong connections to people in Japan and the Japanese Canadian community. The *Sansei* members have all said that part of their motivation for studying dance is to stay connected to Japan and the Japanese Canadian community. Interestingly, for some of the *Shin-issei* the introduction of classical dance made dance less about socializing with other Japanese Canadians than it had been in the past. Several *Shin-issei* have said that dance used to simply be an enjoyable social activity. Now, however, they are motivated by the challenge of improving their skill at dance.

Although there are many differences between generations, within each generation there is also difference. Amongst the *Sansei* members there are differing levels of knowledge about Japanese language and culture. Their families' experiences with internment and their personal experiences with racism differ from each other and affect how dance means to them. Similarly, the *Shin-issei* members value dance differently. Those who have previous experience with Japanese traditional music or dance in Japan seem to connect it more to their Japanese identities. Others do not see dance as particularly related to identity at all. In this way individual personal experiences affect the way dance relates to identity. These differences show that Japanese Canadian identities are not monolithic. They are contingent on generational difference *and* individual experience.

My research has shown that how aspects of Japanese and Canadian culture influence the identities of *Wakaba-kai* members, is greatly determined by agency. The members of *Wakaba-kai* are not passively shaped by the history of Japanese Canadians, gender, or the hegemonic power of the *Iemoto*. The *Sansei* members of *Wakaba-kai* use dance to establish emotional and material connections with Japan and the Japanese-Canadian community and resist assimilation. Dancers are able to learn the highly stylized femininity of dance roles yet interpret and experience dance as empowering and resist conflation with *geisha*. Similarly, *Wakaba-kai* members use the discourse of

tradition and the ideology of continuity selectively to resist being defined by their roles in the hierarchy of the *iemoto* system. *Wakaba-kai* members use the competing (and sometimes complementary) discourses, ideologies and values available in the cultural mix of the diaspora to adapt those aspects that are congruent with their Japanese Canadian identities and resist those that are not. It is in this way that they construct their identities and meet their personal needs through the study of Japanese dance.

In some respects, there is greater freedom to construct identity in the diaspora. I have shown that ideologies of social and gender equality are supported more by social norms in Canada than in Japan. In this social context, *Wakaba-kai* members are able to use these discourses to resist being defined by their identities as students in the *iemoto* system. Also their very physical (and social) distance from Japan may aid their ability to adapt the *iemoto* system in a way that would not be possible in Japan. Yet, at the same time, agency is limited in the diaspora by the way Japanese women are represented in the west. The image of Japanese woman as *geisha* subjects Japanese Canadian women to the combined forces of racism and sexism. Because of this, they cannot completely resist the ascribed identity of sexualized Other. Similarly, although in the context of dance they can choose to do things the Japanese way, in order to function here they are forced to conform to many Canadian norms. As Kyoko said, during the rest of her daily life she must always adjust to the Canadian way but in dance she does not have to. In this sense the ability to express Japanese identity in Canada is limited to specific times and generally takes place in carefully delimited cultural spaces like dance.

What does this add to the literature about Japanese identity in the diaspora? Why is it significant? The notion that Japanese women's agency in diaspora is contingent disrupts Orientalist frameworks that construct the East in opposition to the West. The west is usually associated with equality, individuality, and freedom while the east, specifically Japan, has been associated with gender inequality, hierarchical social structures, collectivism, and the constraints of tradition. Ong (1995) states that the immigration of Asian women to the "West" is often described as a journey from oppression to freedom. My study makes the point that Japanese women do not

experience complete "freedom" in Canada. They are agents, whether they live in Japan or Canada but the way agency manifests is contingent upon a variety of factors.

Agency is expressed in ways that are culturally specific. In diaspora, agency is expressed in ways that are specific to the combination of Japanese and Canadian culture in the multi-cultural context of Canada. The way that Japanese and Canadian culture interact in Canada is strongly influenced by shifting global and local relations. For instance, during and after WWII, the agency of Japanese people in Canada was severely restricted when they were interned and relocated because of racist attitudes exacerbated by the war between Japan and Canada. Similarly, globalization as a large scale trend has not only made it possible for the *shin-issei* members of *Wakaba-kai* to maintain ties with Japan but has facilitated the link between Einojo-sensei and *Wakaba-kai*. This transnational connection has made it easier for *Wakaba-kai* members to develop and maintain a sense of identity in the diaspora. This shows that the processes of globalization may also foster identity in diasporic communities. Finally, the Canadian government's policy of multi-culturalism helps to create a context in which the expression of cultural difference is encouraged.

Various scholars have commented on the need for ethnographic research that considers the transnational transmission of culture (Appadurai, 1996; Clifford, 1997). This study has attempted to trace the flow of tradition and culture between Japan and Canada and map the way it shapes local identities in *Wakaba-kai*. As much as possible, my research has centered on accurately representing the voices and experiences of the members of *Wakaba-kai*. At the same time, my experiences studying traditional arts in Japan and Canada, supported by other ethnographic accounts, have formed the basis for this comparative study. I acknowledge that the experiences of *Wakaba-kai* members are filtered through the lens of my personal experiences and my interpretation of the academic discourse.

My ability to do this research has been contingent on the willingness of my teachers and the other members of *Wakaba-kai* to share their knowledge about Japanese dance. I am extremely grateful to have been given this opportunity. The process of writing about the members of *Wakaba-kai* has resulted in a picture of their identities at

a particular point in time that is framed by academic discourses about globalization, gender, identity, Orientalism, and power. This very act of writing/framing, to a certain extent, fixes them and limits their agency. Yet identity is always in process and *Wakaba-kai* members will continue to construct their identities far into the future. In this way their agency exceeds the writing process and my conclusions.

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APPENDIX: GLOSSARY OF JAPANESE TERMS

Bon-odori. This term refers to a body of Japanese folk dances that are traditionally performed at the Buddhist festival of O-bon in August but have been secularized to a certain extent and are commonly performed at summer festivals.

Bonsai. A traditional Japanese horticultural art in which practitioners carefully tend trees and through various techniques shape them into artistically shaped miniature trees.

Chigiri-e. A Japanese visual art genre which uses torn pieces of Japanese paper to create images.

Furi. Dance movements which represent everyday actions or the "gestural style" of different characters (Sellers-Young, 1993:38).

Geisha. Geisha literally means artist. Geisha are women trained in music and dance who entertain male clients. They are not prostitutes, but because they entertain men and sometimes become the mistresses of wealthy patrons, they are often conflated with prostitutes.

Hauta. A genre of Japanese semi-classical music. It is very similar to *kouta*, except that the shamisen used in *hauta* is larger and plucked with a plectrum rather than the fingers.

Kōten. The Japanese classical dance canon. These dances are often excerpted from *kabuki* plays and include *Musume Dojoji*, *Ame no Goro*, *Kagami Jishi* and many others.

Issei. The term which refers to first generation Japanese Canadians who immigrated to Canada before WWII.

Kabuki. A form of Japanese theatre featuring dance, drama and music that developed in the Edo period (1600-1868).

Kimono. A traditional Japanese garment that is belted with a sash. Rather than using zippers or buttons, it is fastened entirely with various ties (*himo*).

Kiyomoto. A style of Japanese classical vocal music with *shamisen* accompaniment characterized by high pitched singing.

Kouta. A genre of Japanese semi-classical music that is commonly performed in the tea houses of geisha but also makes up a significant part of Japanese dance repertoire. The word literally means "short song" and tend to be one to three minutes in length.

Mai. Dance movements found in *nihon-buyo* derived from Noh theatre.

Minnyo-buyō. Japanese folk dance (often used interchangeably with the term *minzoku-buyō*).

Nagauta. A genre of Japanese music that developed as accompaniment for the Kabuki theatre. It literally means "long song." The *nagauta* ensemble consists of singers, *shamisens*, three types of drums and two different bamboo flutes.

Natori. A performer who reaches a certain level of expertise can purchase a stage name (or *natori*). This new name is used only in the context of the arts community and legitimizes a performer's status as a disciple. The name of the school is adopted as the family name and the new given name typically incorporates one character from the teacher's name.

Nisei. Second-generation Japanese Canadian.

Obi. The sash tied around the waist when wearing a *kimono*.

O-bon. An important buddhist festival held either in mid-July or mid-August in which it is believed that one's ancestors return to visit for three days. At this time, there are many celebrations, including *bon*-dancing, to honor one's ancestors.

Odori. Dance movements in *nihon-buyo* that are derived from folk dance.

Onnagata. A term used to refer to Kabuki actors who specialize in portraying female characters.

-san. Suffix added to the end of names that is generally equivalent to Mr. or Mrs.

Sansei. Third-generation Japanese Canadians.

Sensei. The Japanese word for teacher. When addressing a teacher, the suffix *–sensei* is added to the end of a teacher's stage name.

Shamisen. A three stringed Japanese lute used in traditional Japanese classical and folk genres.

Shin-buyō. This term (literally "new dance") is often also translated as modern dance and refers to a style of dance which is based on the classical movements of *kabuki* dance, but is also strongly influenced by Western dance forms. It is either choreographed to new music (modern Japanese and Western popular music or arrangements of Japanese folk songs) or uses modern choreography with traditional music.

Shin-issei. First-generation Japanese Canadians who have immigrated to Canada after WWII.

Tokiwazu. A narrative genre of shamisen/vocal music.